

RAZZORCAKE

#42



HUNCHBACK
THE REBEL SPELL
WOUNDED LION
GEYKIDO COMET RECORDS
U.S. AIR GUITAR
CHAMPIONSHIPS

TRANZMITORS



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The great news is that *Razorcake* is growing stronger. Between this issue and the last, we uprooted our operations from a termite- and cockroach-infested two-bedroom apartment into the bottom level of a much nicer house. In many ways, it feels like we're starting anew. In that spirit, we are currently inviting more people to be involved in our month-to-month workload. If you would like to volunteer your time or services to *Razorcake*, we're currently looking for help and expertise in the following areas: non-profit grant writer, non-profit researcher (non-profit anything, really), book review section editor, DVD review section editor, FileMaker Pro expert, dependable monthly web columnists, and record review posters for the website.

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—Todd Taylor

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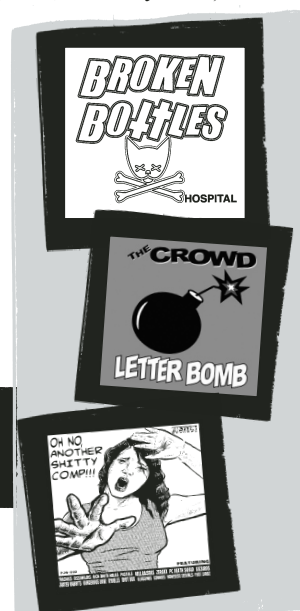
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One Good Thing

If you're informed enough to complain, be smart enough to celebrate. It took me quite awhile to figure that out.

So many underground cultures are based on negation. "Your music sucks." "Politicians suck." "The U.S. sucks." "Bosses suck." "Teachers suck." "Banks suck." "Landlords suck." "Capitalism sucks." "Jocks suck." "Rich people suck." "Idols suck." And there's a lot to be learned by not swallowing from that big spoon of popular acceptance that's being held up in front of us, day in and day out, ready to force feed us if we relax our vigilance.

There's also little doubt that most folks experience quite a bit of suckiness in their lives. It's real easy to get into that Lay-Z-Boy of cynicism, pop up a big bowl of pessimism, salt it up with righteous indignation, and resign to our feature-length life entitled *Fuck This*. I'm not suggesting that suck goes ignored. Like pain, suck can be instructive.

I'm suggesting that you and I—the little pieces of dust who only count to major corporations and the government when they're harvesting funds or votes from us—can find things to celebrate amid all that suck.

There are a lot of friends to be made who rally around a particular suckage. Hate cars? Join a bike collective. Hate popular music? Buy a piece of vinyl, go to a show that's not advertised in any paper. Hate U.S. imperialism? Make a puppet, join a protest march. These can be good first steps, but they're not enough. You're only answering to them, not making your own "hooray!" To be joined solely by collective sucks at the end of the day, you're in a negative place. You're, literally, defined by what you hate, not what you love.

Everybody needs their own "hooray!" Yeah, it sounds idiotic, and I'm not suggesting a reenactment of *Pirates of Penzance* with gummi bears, but the next time you find yourself getting into a deep suck hole, think of one thing that makes you happy. Focus on it for a bit.

I think of otters. Fuckin' love otters. Especially when they're floating on their backs and holding hands. That shit's so cute. They cool me out. Yeah, George Bush is an enormous bag of dicks and the WTO is depressing as all hell, but do you see the smile on those little furry otters' face? Awesome.

Be patient.

Hate landlords? I started saving when I was fourteen. Partially due to that, my fiancé and I moved into a house last month.

Hate banks? Fuck you Bank of America, a thumb scan to cash a check made out to me? Eat me. I joined a local credit union that didn't have bullet proof glass protecting the tellers.

Hate politicians? I went to local meetings. I learned some of their mysterious ways. We helped get a skatepark in our community that wasn't an embarrassment.

Hate popular culture? I crank records and sing along, making up my own words. It's also weirdly gratifying asking the question, "Who?" about a famous person (like Hillary Duff in this issue), and really not knowing who she is.

Hate the wishy-washiness and disorganization of a lot of the underground press? We just released our forty-second issue—seven straight years—without ever missing a self-imposed deadline and without saying, "Sorry this is late. This is the best we could do in a rush."

This is the best we can do with what little we've got, period.

And, oh yeah, we moved our HQ last month in the middle of it all, and that was so far the opposite of hooray! it wasn't even funny. But our new digs are already making up for it.

I can watch the sunset every night.

—Todd Taylor

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February 1st, 2008

ISSUE #44

April 1st, 2008

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Cover photograph by Bev Davies.

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This issue is dedicated to the memory of Evel Knievel and Benazir Bhutto.

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"'Anyways, you do what you can. An' he says, 'the only thing you got to look at is that ever' time they's a little step fo'ward, she may slip back a little, but she never slips clear back. You can prove that,' he says, 'an' that makes the whole thing right. An' that means they wasn't no waste even if it seemed like they was.'"

—John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*



Alicia Trout
and her newborn.

Valentine.

Welcome
to the world, kid.

THANK YOU: One of these ladies is washing dishes for her day job thanks to both Bev Davies and Amy Adoyzie for the cover shot and layout—both of your aims are true; The L.A. Raiders lasted about as long as pull top beer cans thanks to Carlos Reveco for his photo in Liz's column; Crows and cigarettes thanks to Cristy Road for her illustration in Jim's column; And then he kissed me mid-pedal thanks to Gus for his illustration in Amy's column; Utz makes a mighty fine potato chip thanks to Kris Tripplaar for his photo in Gary's column; The Rhythm Chicken can only count to one thanks to Dan "The Eggman" Eggert for his photo; Look who showed up at the playground that day—Lemmy! Joey! No Eddie Vedder!—thanks to Ryan Gelatin for his illustration in Dale's column; It all went downhill for Paul Weller's protagonist after he pulled out a plum thanks to Kiyoshi Nakazawa for his illustration in Nørb's column; Gridiron genocide or just harmless celebration of a pastime? thanks to Brad Beshaw for his illustration in Sean's column; Double Duff, but no "Hat Trick of Duffness" with The Duff Man? thanks to both Bev Davies and Jason Margolis for their photos in Nardwuar's column; Nerds with bad balance and T-shirts of the Ergs! Puerto Rican tour thanks to Joe Evans III and Lauren Measure for the Hunchback interview and layout; Avon lady from Arkansas thanks to Ryan Leach for his interview with Wounded Lion, and Mor Fleisher confirms with her photos that the band has two tambourines; Parents can so way be punk rockers thanks to Joe Evans III, Shanty Cheryl, and Dave Disorder for the interview, photos, and layout for Geykido Comet Records; Plastic genocide or teenage men? You decide thanks to Chris Walter, Bev Davies, Femke van Delft, and Amy Adoyzie for their interview, photos, and art junking of the Tranzmitors; Joe III, thanks for writing half of this issue—including the U.S. Air Guitar Championships article—and you can almost hear Randy Rhodes at their fingertips thanks to Steve Larder for his illustrations; Bread and violence thanks to Allan MacInnis, Jen Dodds, Femke van Delft, and Keith Rosson for the interview, photos, and layout of the Rebel Spell; We not spellerz good. Grammer tough ball stuff. Kurt Morris and Adrian Salas helped proof this issue; Photoshop brain surgery thanks to Chris Baxter for his proovess; Some companies pull their advertising; many readers enjoy their honesty thanks to the following for their record, book, zine, and DVD reviews: Ryan Leach, Kurt Morris, Craven Rock, Sean Koepenick, Buttersnoot, Keith Rosson, Chris Pepus, Art Ettinger, Speedway Randy, Donttouchmybikini, Jennifer Whiteford, Stevo, Corrine, The Lord Kveldulfr, Bryan Static, Joe Evans III, Jimmy Alvarado, CT Terry, Mike Faloan, Sarah Shay, Constantine Koutsoutis, Jenny Moncayo, Will Kwiatowski, and Lauren Trout; They freed up their schedules thanks to Chris Devlin and Dondondondondeedon (Star Wars theme) for helping pack, ship, and sort the last issue.

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WE DO OUR PART COLUMNS

- 6 Liz O. *Guerrilla My Dreams*
- 8 Jim Ruland *Lazy Mick*
- 10 Maddy Tight Pants *Shiftless When Idle*
- 12 Amy Adoyzie *Monster of Fun*
- 15 Ben Snakepit *Snakepit*
- 16 Gary Hornberger *Squeeze My Horn*
- 19 Mitch Clem *Nothing Nice to Say*
- 20 Rhythm Chicken *Dinghole Reports*
- 22 Designated Dale *I'm Against It*
- 24 Art Fuentes *Chico Simio*
- 25 Kiyoshi Nakazawa *Won Ton Not Now*
- 26 Rev. Nørb *Power Pop Police*
- 30 Sean Carswell *A Monkey to Ride the Dog*
- 33 Dan Monick *Photo Page*
- 34 Nardwuar The Human Serviette *Who Are You?*

FEATURES

- 36 *Hunchback* by Joe Evans III
- 42 *Wounded Lion* by Ryan Leach
- 48 *Geykido Comet Records* by Joe Evans III
- 56 *Tranzmitors* by Chris Walter
- 62 *U.S. Air Guitar Championships* by Joe Evans III
- 66 *The Rebel Spell* by Allan MacInnis

FAVORITES AND REVIEWS

- 76 Top 5s *A tattoo of a portrait of my grandma on his forearm...*
- 78 Record *You thought they were wasting your time; well thanks for wasting mine.*
- 104 Zine *In the name of the forest that had to be cut down to print this abomination, please, stop the insanity!...*
- 108 Book *The ending ties everything together nicely, but it's one fuck of a weird ride before you get there...*
- 111 DVD *"If you don't work hard today, you'll look hard for work tomorrow."...*

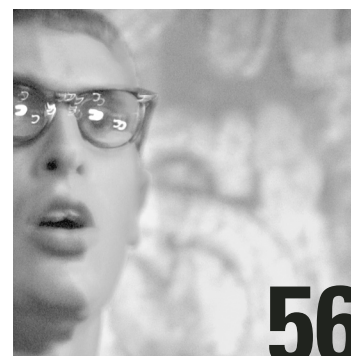
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“Can’t go wrong with something that’s already inauthentic, right?”

Finding Love in Seattle Pride

We were 1,137 miles away from home, in a city where the freeway numbers remained the same, but the hipster neighborhoods couldn’t be more different. The smell of sauerkraut-laden hot dogs mixed with midnight tacos was noticeably absent from the air and the only graffiti we saw was “El Barto” scrawled on the back of an old brick building by, presumably, some *Simpsons*-obsessed young person. We stood on the corner of Pike Street, in front of a bar where the microbrews on tap made reference to Washington, looking for my interviewee.

Earlier that evening, Carlos, my boyfriend and partner in all techno-related pursuits, and I took the locals’ suggestions and grabbed dinner at a Mexican restaurant less than a full block away from the club. I should have put the word Mexican in quotation marks, on account of the fact that the food was sorely lacking in lard. The burrito made Carlos homesick for the cheaper and more flavorful variety offered at virtually every major intersection in Los Angeles. That, dear reader, was why I had ordered nachos. Can’t go wrong with something that’s already inauthentic, right?

We were walking back to the club when I received a text message from the interviewee. He was flying in from our hometown and was at the airport waiting for his ride. He would be late, he said. Carlos and I started walking down the street, popped inside a record store, and wandered a bit until we settled in one of the numerous non-corporate coffeehouses we passed. A few hours later, I received another text message from the interviewee, which was how we ended up in front of the three-roomed nightclub in the city we had never visited before, looking for someone we had never met.

I should have recognized Johnny Love instantly. He was perhaps the only person in a crowd of hipsters who looked like the kids back home. He wore those jeans that somehow manage to sag in the ass even

though they lay tight around boy-skinny legs and the hood of his sweatshirt was pulled over the top of his head despite the fact that it was probably colder in Southern California right then. We briefly introduced ourselves and then followed the DJ down a flight or two of stairs, into a backstage area that was actually a basement. We peeked through a series of doorways before finally settling down on a worn sofa in an empty room with white walls covered in art school doodles.

Love is half of the DJ duo Guns N Bombs, the DJ production duo that has released tracks on the currently hot shit dance label Kitsune, transformed a Gossip track into a keytar-drenched disco diva number, and churned Danish pop duo Junior Senior through a rave machine. Love is one of a handful of L.A.-based artists who have managed to gain international recognition. Here in Seattle, where he was playing solo as part of the annual Decibel Festival (his music-making partner Filip Turbotito was in Europe at the time), Love chose to represent. Underneath the hoodie was a Dodger baseball cap and a Raiders T-shirt that must have dated back to whenever it was that we last had a football team. Now, this would have been considered odd attire even back home, but it was rendered more bizarre for the fact that Love has only lived in Los Angeles for a year.

The DJ grew up in Chicago, a city renowned the world over for its contribution to dance music in the form of house. He felt the influence early on in his life, noting that before hip-hop took shape in the city, house, and Italo disco, the Giorgio Moroder-influenced sound that we referred to as Hi-NRG in Los Angeles, was everywhere.

“I’ve been raving since I was six,” he claimed before clarifying, “well, not really, but I’ve been listening to that kind of music since I was a little kid.”

But, the connection to dance music in Love’s hometown was not enough to keep him there.

“Have you ever been to Chicago with the awful, awful weather?” he asked.

I thought back to my one venture to the Midwestern city, a three-hour layover at Midway Airport in the middle of November that resulted in the freezing of both my hands and face as I attempted to smoke a cigarette.

“Yes,” I answered.

“That’s reason part one,” he replied. “That’s the most important reason. That’s the reason I didn’t move to New York. I did not want to go someplace where it is humid and freezing cold.”

Fair enough. After all, that’s the same reason my mother and her family left Cleveland for the orange grove-covered San Fernando Valley in the early 1960s.

“The second reason is because Chicago is really stagnant,” he added before starting another sentence and pausing to shift trains of thought. “It’s really competitive there, but in a bad way. Everybody is trying to cut each other down and there’s no sort of cooperation there. Everybody is trying to fuck each other over. L.A. is the opposite. You wouldn’t expect it, but everyone is into working with each other.”

Well, I would expect it. It did, however, strike me as odd that someone who wasn’t from Los Angeles and who had only lived in our fair city for a year or so would make the claim that the people are actually decent, cooperative folk. I grew up in Los Angeles and since I entered college a decade ago, I have had more encounters with transplants than other natives. Through the authority of people who can barely pronounce street names like Cahuenga and Sepulveda, I have learned that my city sucks. From what I have been told, the people are cooler in San Francisco (this coming from the condescending tone of people who can’t complete a thought without copious use of the—for lack of a better term—word “hella”). The food is better in New York City (only if your palate can handle no more exotic fare than bagels



Photo by Carlos Reveco

Through the authority of people who can barely pronounce street names like Cahuenga and Sepulveda, I have learned that my city sucks.

with cream cheese and pizza). And traffic, well that's better just about everywhere else (okay, I'll concede that point to the naysayers, but if those haters all left L.A., we probably wouldn't have any traffic).

The one gripe I hear from people, no matter their city of origin, is that L.A. is a city of people just trying to get rich and famous. Ironically, this generally comes from those who moved here for that same reason. That mentality, though, is simply a fallacy perpetuated by the people who hang out around paparazzi posts. When you look past the surface, L.A. isn't so much a place where you can become a celebrity, but a place where you can create a life for yourself that is beyond anything you could have had in your hometown. In L.A., the only limitations are those set by your own imagination. Johnny Love seems to recognize that.

Love met Turbotito on MySpace. When the two cut their first track, he sent out a bulletin on the social networking site and individual messages to the people who run the influential French dance music blog Fluokids and the aforementioned record label, Kitsune. Both bit.

"I was in L.A. for less than two months and we were signed," says Love.

This isn't your typical L.A. story. Love was definitely the beneficiary of a stroke of right-place-right-time, arriving in Los Angeles at precisely the moment when the city exploded in day-glo rave colors. But, undoubtedly, Love is at a point in his career that he wouldn't have hit if he had stayed in Chicago.

"I should have moved sooner," he confessed.

Later on that evening, Love hit the decks armed with a mix of new school French-styled dance music filled with disco beats and filtered synth lines and Chicago-styled acid house complete with the screeching sounds of the Roland TB-303, which he played while dancing heartily in his Dodger cap and L.A. Raiders T-shirt. The crowd was only a fraction of the size that such an event would draw in Los Angeles, but that didn't really matter. Carlos and I stood up at the front and danced with hometown pride.

—Liz Ohanesian





“Kerouac taught me how to live. Maybe he could teach me how to write.”

On the Road... Again.

Jack Kerouac is back in the news.

The legendary original manuscript for *On the Road* is on display at the New York Public Library. Published in 1957, Kerouac's breakout novel has been called everything from the birth of America's counter-cultural movement to the most quintessential American work since Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

On the Road tells the story of a writer named Sal Paradise who restlessly crisscrosses the country in search of a good time. The book is based on Kerouac's own travels in America after World War II, but the places he goes take a back seat to the people he sees.

All the leading figures of the Beat Generation are significant characters: Dean Moriarty, Sal's mentor on the road, is Neal Cassady (who enjoyed a second fifteen minutes of fame as one of the Merry Pranksters in Tom Wolfe's *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*), Carlo Marx is Allen Ginsburg (author of the epic poem "Howl") and Old Bull Lee is William S. Burroughs (author of *Naked Lunch*). They comprise the Holy Trinity of the Beat Generation, a moniker that gained steam in the mainstream media because it was a much nicer way of saying that the bohemian literary movement was full of junkies and queers—just like a punk show in the '70s.

Kerouac's *On the Road* is easily the most accessible work to come out of the Beat Generation. For Kerouac's cast of characters, the old saw "it's the journey, not the destination" isn't just an ethos, it's a way of life. This relentless drive suits Kerouac's energetic and effusive writing style. Part of its appeal is Kerouac's frankness with failure. He makes mistakes. Things don't work out. People let him down. He second-guesses himself. Sometimes his adventures turn out to be grindingly dull, but the setbacks don't slow him down. Sal and Dean are always on the move, constantly in search of an elusive truth at the next stop, the next city, the next trip. "Somewhere along the line," Kerouac writes, "the pearl would be handed to me."

It's impossible to underestimate *On the Road*'s influence on American culture. When the book was published in 1957, America was moving in two directions: the older generation, who'd experienced first-hand the country's worst economic depression and the world's worst war, craved stability

and comfortably slid into commie-fearing conservatism. Not the younger generation. They wanted nothing more than to gas up the Chevy and go, go, go. You could say that reading *On the Road* in the '50s was like going to see the Ramones in the '70s: kids were shocked that something so simple could be so captivating, so essential. The Ramones changed the face of rock music not because they were exceptional, but because their audience left a show believing if the Ramones could do it, so could they.

And so it was with *On the Road*. It was no more "just a book," than the Ramones were "just a band." *On the Road* was a blueprint for escape, a nationwide wake-up call to bored teenagers across the land. *On the Road* was a reminder that there was a big country out there waiting to be explored. All you had to do was go.

That's how it was for me anyway.

I first stumbled upon *On the Road* in '87 while I was in the Navy. My ship was so small the library consisted of a cardboard box on a shelf in the after crew's lounge. Every so often, books would mysteriously appear. Due to various violations against the Uniform Code of Military Justice that I won't get into here, I was frequently restricted to the ship for long periods of time. I had a lot free time on my hands. The books were a godsend.

I wasn't a discriminating reader. I'd rummage through the box, looking for something to read while I sat on the shitter. I'd read anything. The name Jack Kerouac meant nothing to me.

The timing was perfect. I'd recently returned from a six-month tour that took me all over the Western Pacific from Japan to Australia. I saw things I never in my wildest dreams could have imagined. The experience changed me, helped form the person I am today. But when I returned to the States, I went back to being a non-descript piece of government property, a second-class citizen, a squid. I felt as if "the pearl had been handed to me," in Hong Kong, Singapore, or the Philippines, but somewhere along the line I lost it.

When I read *On the Road*, my ship was steaming for San Francisco, where we were scheduled to spend three days

moored at Treasure Island before going up the Sacramento River to offload the nuclear weapons we could neither confirm nor deny carrying. I devoured the novel as we made our way up the California coast. Sal's first adventure in the book is a cross-country trip to San Francisco where he hopes to sign on with a ship in the merchant marines. I took this as a sign. Things don't work out for Sal and he leaves California broke and dejected, but that didn't concern me in the least.

I disembarked the ship and went in search of Kerouac's "romantic white city." I went to Coit Tower, the Embarcadero, and Market Street—just as Sal Paradise had done. I went dancing, ate mescaline, drank tequila and orange juice in the street, kissed a girl on a tennis court, and kicked in the headlights of Volkswagen bug—all of which was out of character for me (especially the whole kicking in the headlights thing, which I blame on the mescaline, but when my shipmate started circling the bug while quoting *Clockwork Orange*, it seemed like something I needed to do).

The point here is not the stupidly amazing time I had in San Francisco, but that I'd transformed into one of those characters who "burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars." I'd turned a page in the story of my life and I owed it all to Kerouac.

I read *On the Road* again a few years later in college and it blew my mind all over again. I thought I'd learned all that Kerouac had to teach me on the streets of San Francisco, but I was only getting started.

I read every book by or about Kerouac I could get my hands on. I changed my major to English just so I could spend more time reading. I even took a long road trip all the way up to Lowell, Massachusetts—Kerouac's birth place—just to see the town that had informed so much of his early work. I had it in my head that I wanted to be a writer. Kerouac taught me how to live. Maybe he could teach me how to write.

Kerouac had this theory of spontaneous poetics. The basic idea behind it is that the first thought is the best thought, and anything that comes after is a corruption of the original idea. He was deeply suspicious of revision. Not surprisingly, most of Kerouac's novels



Illustration by Cristy Road

Reading *On the Road* in the '50s
was like going to see the Ramones in the '70s:
kids were shocked that something so simple
could be so captivating, so essential.

are written in the first person. There are a lot of dreams in his books and a great deal of stream-of-consciousness writing. A lot of it is absolute crap that had no business being published. Spontaneity may be essential for living an interesting life, but it makes for some perfectly awful writing.

On the Road made Jack Kerouac a household name. He went to bed one night a struggling writer and woke up the poster boy for the Beat Generation. In 1957, Kerouac was thirty-five years old and he had a whole pile of manuscripts that the public was suddenly hungry for. Some of these books are amazingly good (*Visions of Cody* is my favorite). Some of them are appallingly bad. People were more interested in Kerouac than they were in his work and, fifty years later, little has changed. For instance, if you'd like to know what Kerouac's dreams were like, you can read the aptly titled "Book of Dreams," but I don't recommend that you do.

After four years of mucking through Kerouac's body of work, one of the things

that stood out was how different *On the Road* is from the rest of his work. For all its joyful enthusiasm, *On the Road* is a fairly conventional novel in both style and content. The weirdness of his later novels (some of which were actually written before *On the Road*) is nowhere to be found.

For the last fifty years, bohemian literature professors have been kicking around the rumor that *On the Road* was extensively edited before it was published. The original version of *On the Road*, or so they claimed, was written on sheets of butcher paper that were ten feet long and had been taped together so that Kerouac wouldn't have to stop typing to change pages. *On the Road*, they said in hushed amazement, was written in three weeks on an epic Benzedrine binge.

That means the champion of spontaneity and the enemy of editing owed his fame to the book that had been revised more than anything he'd ever written. It's a little like being a self-taught prodigy on the piano who gets famous for playing the kazoo. At least

that's how one imagines Kerouac felt as he drank himself into an early grave in 1969.

As for the original manuscript of *On the Road*, it really does exist, all 120 feet of it, a single block of typewritten prose without paragraph or page breaks. The Kerouac estate put it up for auction in 2004 and it was purchased by Jim Isray, who owns the Indianapolis Colts. To his credit, he's shared his bounty with the public, and the manuscript has been on the road for several years. It's currently on display at the New York Public Library until March 16, 2008.

My infatuation with Kerouac has faded. After the third hippy recommended the book to me, the bloom came off the rose. I'm not the same person I was when the book found its way into my hands. Whenever I pick up the book, the old magic comes back. I still have that desire to "burn, burn, burn," just not too brightly, and not all the time.

Maybe I ought to take a trip to New York.

—Jim Ruland



"When one evaluates their own mortality, one quickly realizes that we're not dealing with enough time to fuck around."

A Simple Grunge Band Preference with Lifelong Implications

Greetings from the lair of Ms. Tight Pants, where the coffee runs freely, Bad Religion's *No Control* plays loudly, and the pajamas feature glow-in-the-dark space ships! I come to you today to present a formal scientific argument, the likes of which have not been seen since the work of Stephen Hawking and Albert Einstein... COMBINED! Yes, it's like combining Screeching Weasel's "Leather Jacket" and The Muffs "North Pole." Yes, it is just THAT important!

Oftentimes, when people talk about how they first got into punk rock, they say it was because of their rebellion against society (dude!), their fucked-up childhoods, or their innate understanding of the genius of Black Flag's "Depression." Indeed, indeed, these are all relevant, and deserve their time, BUT... through literally MINUTES of scientific analysis, I have uncovered a deeper framework for understanding the chemical conversion from mainstream to punk rock. Furthermore, I have uncovered a way to predict the future involvement in punk rock, and the longevity of that association!

This theory cannot hope to encompass all punks. Crimethinc punks, sit this one out! All the young punks, too! My argument is aimed at the "responsa-punks," the punks in their late '20s/early '30s, who grew up coveting the Mutant Pop catalog and pink Converse shoes!

Although we might like to pretend that the first record we ever heard was actually by Madonna, or, in my case, the *Dirty Dancing* soundtrack (Hungry Eyes are go!), but almost all of the time that middle period goes unrevealed. While there is humor in dancing to Paula Abdul as a twelve-year-old, there is no glory in... GRUNGE MUSIC!

Yes, the cat is out of the bag! If you are a punk "of a certain age," you cannot avoid it. You inevitably had a decent collection of Alice in Chains and Soundgarden tapes! You were known to head bang at the Stone Temple Pilots concert, and dye your hair

purple with Manic Panic while wearing the dreaded baggy jeans and flannel shirt! Yes, there is a roughly 87.7% chance that you were a grunge rocker!

But have no fear! You do not need to burn your entire Sub Pop music collection, for there can be redemption in your shame! However, it (your coolness and self respect) hinges one crucial question (drumroll): Did you prefer Pearl Jam or Nirvana?

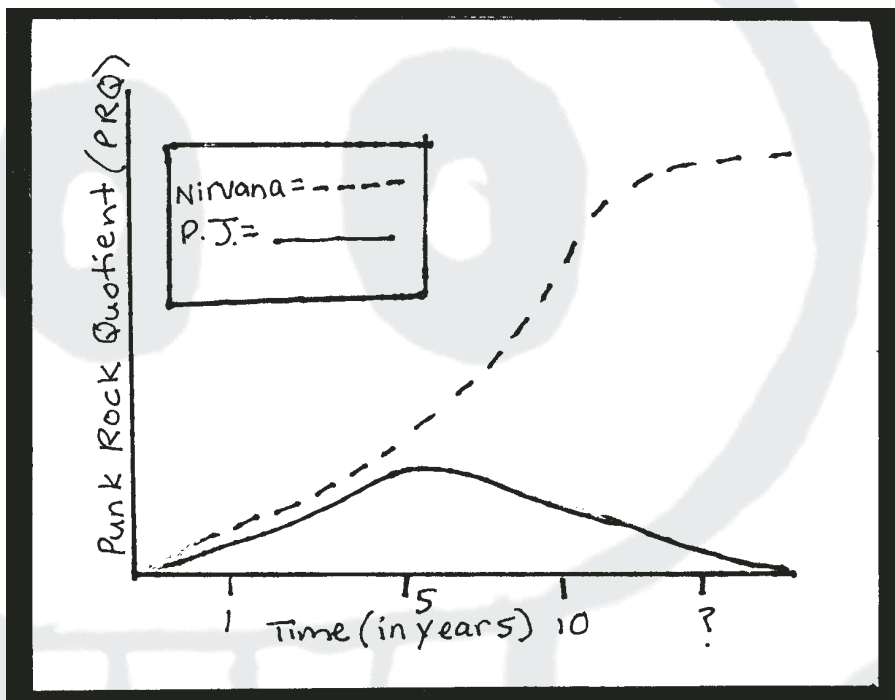
"But it's such a simple question," you protest. "How can it determine the rest of my life?" I appreciate your narrator-induced questioning, really, I do! And so what follows is my trajectory analysis of the different paths taken by each group.

Before we begin, a brief explanation. I understand that many people, myself included, shamefully enough liked both of these bands, but in all my years (two) of grunge fandom, I never discovered anyone who didn't have a preference, and, moreover, who didn't argue vehemently for that preference. Perhaps this is because I grew up in Milwaukee, where the waters were clearly tainted (enhanced?) with a chemical that makes punks rate their music (my friend actually ranked his top 100 albums of all time, and posted the list in his house). But I like to think that all punks are, at their roots, complete and total geeks who spend at least 25% of their time debating the merits of The Beat versus 20/20, so anyway, anyway, ANYWAY, onto the situation at hand!

Okay, so let's address the Pearl Jam fans first. As a previous member of the Pearl Jam "Ten" fanclub (seriously!), I have a basic understanding of Eddie Vedder & Co. Through my careful study of my friends when I was fourteen, I can deduce that the majority of Pearl Jam fans among them were initially into metal, and spent their time setting up cool basement lairs equipped with a stereo and posters of *Interview with a Vampire*. Oh wait, that's my sophomore-year ex-boyfriend. Yikes.

Pearl Jam fans seem fixated on the musical talents of their favorite band, often taking up the guitar just to learn how to play "Even Flow." The boys all had long hair and lowered their heads when they talked, in an effort to make themselves seem more serious.

Sadly, the fans of "Jeremy" lacked an



appropriate gateway to, dare I say, better music. In other words, Pearl Jam lead to a dead-end street, populated by Scott Weiland, Chris Cornell, and discarded army pants and Doc Martens. Yes, a tragic fate! On a greater level, Pearl Jam fans slowly drifted into lameness, flirting (again) with metal, and then eventually ending up in college, smoking pot, and tacking Bob Marley posters to their dorm wall.

Some Pearl Jam fans, however, were destined for greatness. In a shocking example of the increased Non-Punk Lameness Quotient (NPLQ), I present to you several personal anecdotes. One of my friends who preferred Pearl Jam went on to become a college drop-out who spends most of his time involved in various live-action role playing events. Numerous friends jumped off the radar, leaving "alternative music" altogether, and working cubicle-based jobs vaguely related to computers. One high-school Pearl Jam friend was, at last sighting, working at one of those watch-repair kiosks in the mall. In other words, Eddie Vedder led them to only the bleakest of fates!

But there is one crucial, and most disturbing, example. When I was fourteen, I was friends with a boy who LOVED Pearl Jam. He would quiz me about the names of all the members, and the lyrics to "Porch." If I got something wrong, he would sigh and start discussing how posers are ruining grunge altogether. He spent his time practicing riffs from "Ten" and grew his hair to the appropriate past-shoulder length. In other words, he was a hardcore Pearl Jam fan who would scoff at the mere question as to whether Nirvana was on the same level. And, not having conducted any statistical analysis of the situation, I believed, in my youthful enthusiasm, that he was one of the coolest people I knew. "So," you ask, "What's he up to these days?" Well (and I swear I'm not joking), he's now the drummer for... Fall Out Boy! Seriously!

When one evaluates their own mortality, one quickly realizes that we're not dealing with enough time to fuck around. So, if we're smart, we cram in as much rock and roll, candy, debauchery, and punk rock dance parties as possible, knowing that each day could be our last. We find jobs that either a.) allow us to do the above as much as possible, or b.) allow us to pursue a non-stupid, useful profession like teaching or working at a cereal-themed amusement park. In other words, we don't fuck around! And I cannot think of a more bullshit and boring way to spend one's few decades on this earth by being in a fake pop punk band that plays on (according to my wikipedia search) a "Honda Civic Tour."

So, while Pearl Jam fans are drumming along to the sounds of a mid-level automobile, what's up with the Kurt Cobain fans? Nirvana fans were a different group entirely. In my experience, Nirvana fans got into the band out of nowhere. I personally put down my Wilson Phillips tape for the music of Kurt Cobain! Yes, I went from the sweet sounds

of "Hold On" ("I know this pain/Why do you lock yourself up in these chains?") to the angst-ridden "On a Plain" ("I'll start this off without any words/I got so high I scratched till I bled").

Nirvana fans did, of course, overlap with the Pearl Jam fans. We wore flannel shirts and baggy pants (even me, for shame!). The boys grew their hair out, but tended not to grow it as long and metal-ish as "Jeremy" fans. Crucially, the percentage of Nirvana fans wearing Converse shoes (a predictor of future punk rock-i-tude) was approximately 79%, compared to a dismal 23% showing for the P.J. fans.

But whereas Pearl Jam led to even more grunge and eventual mainstream lameness, Kurt Cobain wore Daniel Johnston t-shirts, went on tour with Sonic Youth and Dinosaur Jr, and talked about how much he liked early '80s L.A. punk. Indeed, Nirvana even later employed an ex-Germ! So, for the obsessed fans who may or may not have built a giant Nirvana collage on their bedroom wall (ahem!), Nirvana led to Sonic Youth, which led to Dinosaur Jr, which led to watching the video 1991: *The Year Punk Broke*, which led to wondering "What is punk, anyway?" which led to a trip to the local cool record store, which led to the purchase of the *Queers Grow Up* and The Clash's *The Clash*, and, well, the rest is history.

Almost all of my high school friends who are still non-mainstream-ish, doing cool stuff, and regularly hosting seven-inch dance parties preferred Nirvana. Some of them work lame

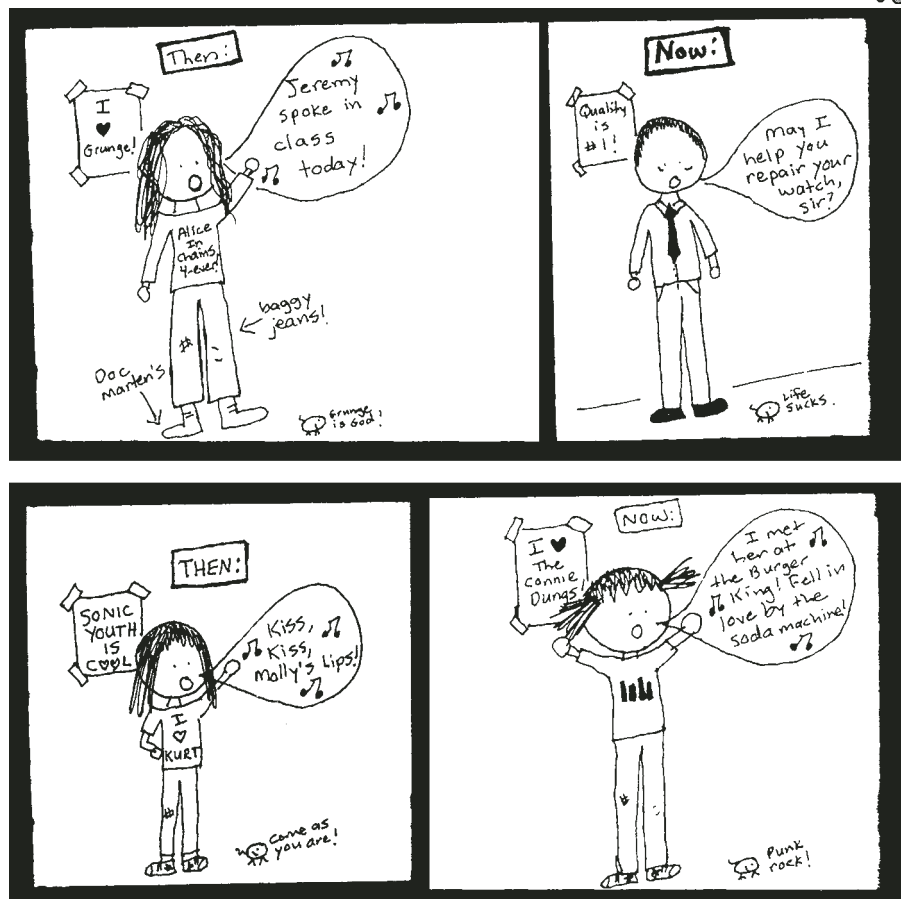
jobs, but, more crucially, none of them take these jobs seriously, and instead work those jobs at the bare minimum necessary to sustain life, and to allow maximum time for crazy adventures. My Nirvana friends still like to break into swimming pools in the middle of the night, still hate both Republicans and Democrats, and still understand the redemptive qualities of listening to Dag Nasty's "Can I Say" on maximum volume! ("Fear of failure/fear of reprimand!")

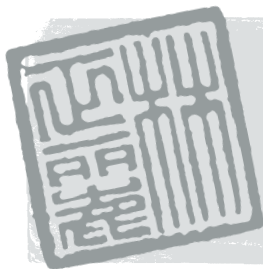
Little did any of us know that a simple grunge band preference would have such lifelong implications! When you're fourteen and angst-ridden and sitting in your bedroom hating your parents and wishing you were dead, or at least eighteen, how would you know that the differing levels of wear-and-tear on your copies of *Bleach* and *Vs* would become so scientifically relevant to a punk girl trying to figure out a topic for a Razorcake column!

Of course, one could make the chicken or the egg argument. Were Nirvana fans intrinsically cooler than Pearl Jam fans? Was there a pre-existing punk rock disposition that led these high schoolers to *Nevermind*? Perhaps, but I like to think that liking a band with a song called "Territorial Pissings" is still worth something.

—Maddy

P.S. Send pictures of your own high school Nirvana shrine to me, c/o Razorcake!





MONSTER OF FUN

AMY ADOYZIE

"I am undeniably blessed. Not like Jesus-loves-me-this-I-know, but in a fuck-yeah-I'm-alive-'n-shit kinda way."

Infinite Goodness & Heavy Mettle

Just because I didn't think it could happen doesn't mean it can't. The void within my hard white skull can only handle and process a limited number of possibilities.

Just because I didn't think that two people could kiss while bike riding doesn't mean it can't happen.

The Willamette River runs through the center of Portland, with ten bridges connecting the east and west sides over the murky waterway. Our small group huddled beneath the Steel Bridge casting fishing lines into the river on a grey Wednesday. Caleb caught a catfish the day before, but none of us reeled in anything this time. It didn't matter if we had a catch because while everyone else was hustling home during rush hour, we were swigging from a brown paper bag and watching at the streetlights flicker on the rolling ripples of the river. Our only concern was the translucent line swaying from the tip of the pole.

When I moved here two years ago, I was only half-kidding when I referred to it as my *Portland retirement home*. I quit the real world at twenty-four and spent the following year in the Rose City forgetting about ten-hour workdays and working for the weekend. Everyday was a weekend on my calendar. When I returned from my year-long volunteer stint in China, there was no question that I would move back to where I could fish in the middle of the city, in the middle of the week.

After the sun disappeared below the horizon, we rode over the river to enjoy cheap sushi downtown. I took shots of contraband whiskey from the tiny plates reserved for soy sauce and wasabi. My stomach swirled with coffee, whiskey, and miso soup.

A sheet of asphalt blue clouds blanketed the late evening sky on our ride home. The energy of the caffeine coursed through my limbs and the liquor warmed my skin against the wind. Curtis and I stopped in the middle of the Hawthorne Bridge to gaze at the glimmering reflection of the city shining off the river.

We had only known each other for about a month, and in that first week we were bonded for eternity.

"...if you do *that*, I'll owe you a beer for life," Curtis promised and we hooked our most fragile fingers together.

"Pinky swear?" I tugged his hand.

"Pinky swear." He tugged back.

I fulfilled my end of the promise by being obnoxious to an arch nemesis on his behalf and managed to not get my ass kicked by being obscenely cheerful. Everyone should keep their friends close, enemies closer, and those who owe them a daily beer the closest. To redeem my pinky swear reward, I met him in bars for a healthy dose of neat whiskey with a beer back or he'd show up at my house with a chilled six-pack of Hamm's.

"I keep waiting for you to throw in the towel," he said, doubting my ability to hang.

I took a sip from the pint glass, shook my head, and smiled, "Curtis, I don't even have a towel to throw in."

Those short five weeks we had together were spent slurping down bowls of hot pho, publishing two issues of our zine, and biking around empty city streets in the dead of night like we were the only ones alive.

Even with two-ton cars rushing behind us on the bridge, the swell of liquor blocked the sounds of traffic and all I could hear was the thump of my heart against my chest. We pedaled across the bridge into the Ladd's Addition neighborhood of centrally radiating streets lined with looming elm trees that made us feel like we were riding through a tunnel of toasty fall leaves.

He pulled up alongside me on his blue Huffy until we were just inches from each other. Just as we rolled beneath the honey yellow glow of a streetlamp, he let go of a handlebar and leaned toward me. I turned to ask what he was doing. But before I could utter a word, my eyelids intuitively slid down and he kissed me.

"Holy shit!" I hollered as he sped away like a bandit.

I lifted my head against the chilly fall breeze and felt a soft coolness where our lips met.

I am undeniably blessed.

Not like Jesus-loves-me-this-I-know, but in a fuck-yeah-I'm-alive-'n-shit kinda way.

Ever since my return from China, I have been overwhelmed with appreciation

for what I have here. During every show I've attended in the past months, there's an inevitable moment in the middle of sweating and dancing to loud, crunchy guitars and pounding drums where my cheeks are sore from smiling and I am overcome with joy of being right there, right then.

These instances of unadulterated contentment and gratification sneak up on me and I can feel my heart gushing fresh blood until it tingles in my fingers and toes. When Gus comes home with a slice of barbecue chicken pizza just for me, it's like I won the lottery of the best best friends. When Marah surprised me with Jarritos mandarin-flavored chapstick, it's like goodness is infinite. When I bike in a dress with the gentle summer wind gliding against my short bare legs, it's like the sun rose for me.

Sometimes nothing happens.

Sometimes simply waking up is enough. Waking up with his arm tucked beneath my neck and holding my hand.

Sometimes writing a song about beer is enough. Playing music in a cold basement like we discovered those three chords and now we're spreading the gospel.

Nothing and everything happens with different degrees of intensity. We assign meaning and weight with our own world-weary views. Is the glass half empty or half full? I'm just stoked there's a glass in my hand to clink with yours as we toast the most mundane details of our lives. There's no shame in treasuring all of the small things that make everyday run its twenty-four-hour course.

We take and give, inhale and exhale. We press our fingers against our wrists to feel our pulses, not to remind us that we're alive, but because we want to know how fast we can make it beat.

One of the most densely populated nations in the world lies east of India. Imagine half of the American population, about 150 million folks, shoved and squeezed onto a mass of land the size of Wisconsin. It's plagued with devastating natural disasters of floods and cyclones annually. That's Bangladesh, my home for the next year and a half.

“I keep
waiting
for you
to throw in
the towel.”

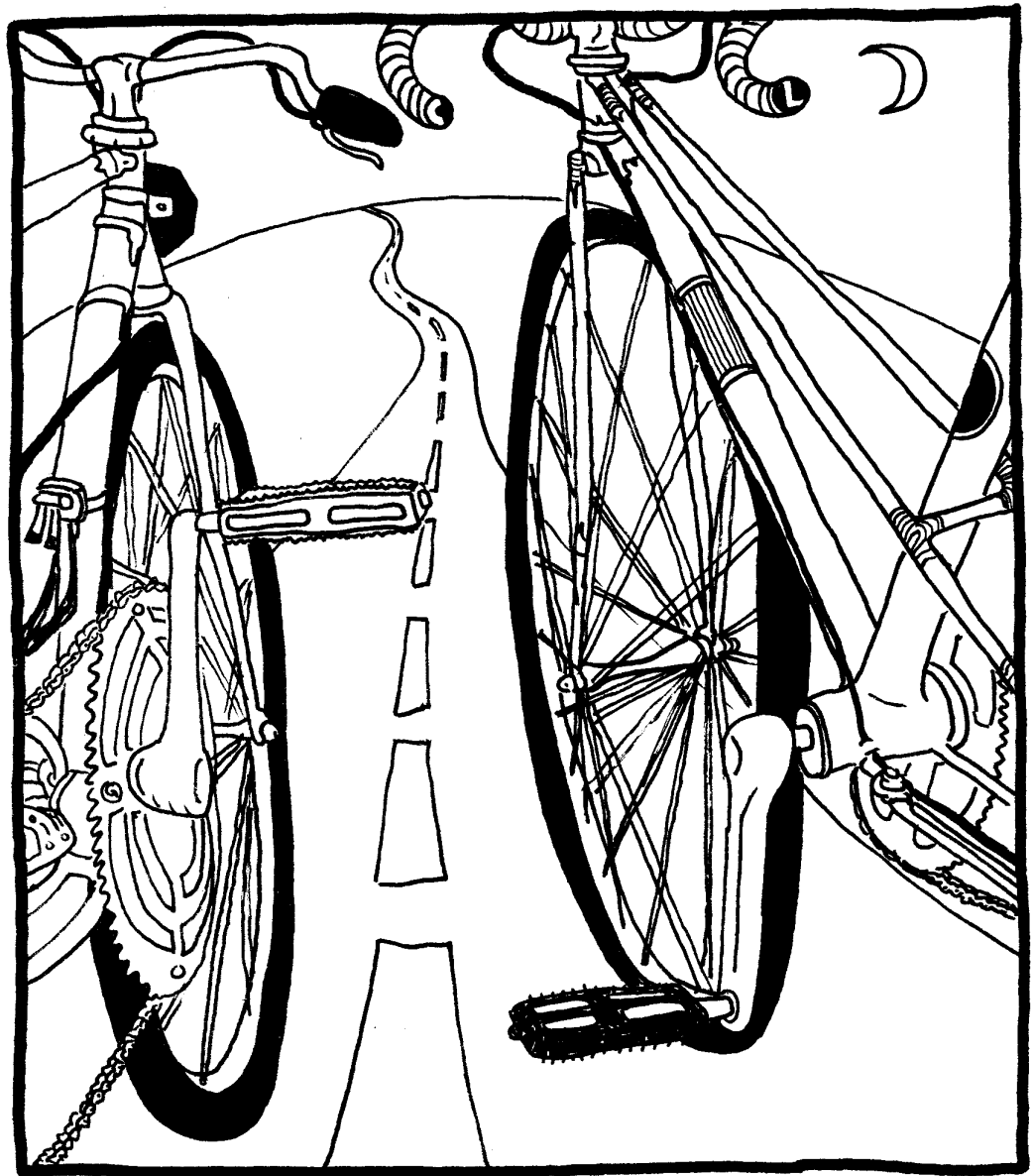


Illustration by Gus

**“Curtis, I don’t even have
a towel to throw in.”**

A year and a half ago, I didn’t even know Bangladesh was a country. Just because I’m geographically ignorant doesn’t mean that I won’t end up living and working in a nation that I didn’t know existed.

Many of us fear the things we don’t know. We fear discomfort and change because it’s difficult and trying. But it’s in those moments where we find purpose and test the mettle of our guts. Our insides are made of muscles and nerves; it’s up to us to decide how to use them.

Somewhere in between Clinton and Powell on SE 36th, my hands used to clench and squeeze the handlebars, wearing on the

brakes pads as I rode down a hill that pushed my bike faster than I could ever pedal it. Nowadays, I don’t even finger the aluminum brake levers and welcome the blast of cold air through strands of my knotted hair.

It isn’t that I’m brave—I’m just less scared.

Bangladesh is another chapter in my volunteer saga, serving in a developing nation in a naïve attempt to give back. Me, the child of refugee immigrants, working towards helping Asian refugee women create their own stories of perseverance and empowerment.

While I’m there, I’ll be forced to place a bookmark on my miraculous life here with

people whom I love so much that it pains me to think that I won’t be with them for eighteen months. But I’m comforted in knowing that the narratives of our lives are long, bend, and tangle. They twist and tell stories we couldn’t imagine. We carry plots thick with alcohol and despair, but ultimately we read between the lines to find hope and joy in everything we do and everyone we know.

—Amy Adoyzie
myspace.com/therealchinaloca



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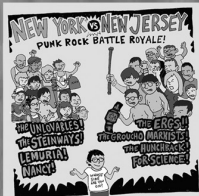
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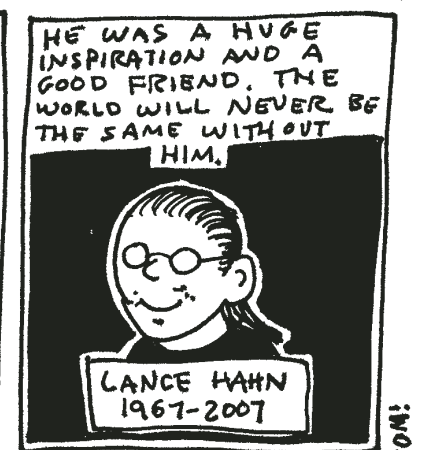
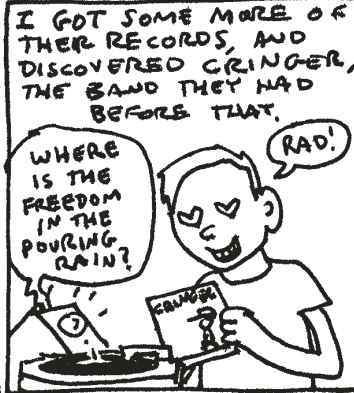


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SQUEEZE MY HORN

GARY HORNBERGER

"I start to search for answers to questions nobody is asking of me."

Full Credit to Deny Everything

I once stumbled on a movie titled *Crazy People*. As the cover states, it's a comedy about truth in advertising. Dudley Moore plays the main character, and he's an ad man who's on the slide. He writes some ads that are a little blunt and somehow get into print. The company has him committed, later finding that the ads are selling oh so well that they try to pull him out of the asylum but he doesn't want to go. This perks the ears of the other crazy inmates and the truth in advertising hits full steam.

Now, the reason I use this visual is to complain about the lack of truth in some of the things I read or hear at work. First off are the restrooms. Why put the sign up that states "We take pride in our clean restrooms" when, for seven days straight, there has been a puddle of piss on the floor and one of our local artists has taken up using shit as his happy medium and smeared it creatively on the stall walls? I like the way that rhymes. There is also the problem of finding paper to wipe the boss's ass with for some of the more lip-worthy employees. Shut up. You know who you are.

Next on my list of false ads is "We are the low price leader." Based on what? You can't be the low price leader just because you took forty items off your weekly ad that you know for only that week will be lower than the guy down the block. No, I believe the crazy people are the ones who I work for. I believe now that lying is the way to go to get ahead in the work place.

For instance, just today I was trying to push into my cooler a large, heavy pallet of product that was leaning a bit and I was trying to move it slowly around a pallet of eggs. A grocery manager—we'll call her Sylvia—told another worker "don't just stand there, help him push" when all of the sudden the pallet I'm pushing picks up steam, crashes into the eggs, and sends me into an encore of a *Pulp Fiction* recital, to which the manager chimes up with "What did you do that for?" Denial can be so damn useful, can't it?

I sometimes think that there is a school for grocery managers and it is applied in a somewhat *Clockwork Orange* fashion. If something works, take full credit for that something, but if it doesn't work, deny it as your own until it disappears. I really seem to be quoting movies here don't I? So, if I were

to try the truth in advertising scheme, would it go like "We try to keep our restrooms clean, but sometimes the paper runs out and you can just smear your ass on the walls," or "We are the low price leader on forty items, but only for a week"? I kind of like it. Hell, I'll even be the guy who gets on the loudspeaker and recites the verse every hour.

Why does this bother me so much? If one more person tells me to do something a certain way and then tells me that way is wrong, or some ad gets me pumped up only to be deflated when I'm told "sorry," I'm going to go on a kick-some-ass spree. I'm getting old and my time is more precious so don't make me waste it. Just let me buy my juice and don't try to entice me with sale items. I'm a horse with blinders and I just want to go straight, thank you.

OGNER STUMP'S ONE THOUSAND SORROWS

By A. Goldfarb, \$9.00 U.S.

If you're thrilled by the musings of Chas Adams or Edward Gorey, then you're going to love getting a paper slice on this book. Unfortunately, it falls far short of one thousand sorrows, but the twenty-five or so that it does contain makes you wonder what goes on in the author's head. Let's start with number one, titled "Guests." Reluctantly, the main character Ogner wakes to the day and then, even more reluctantly, opens the door to find two of the most irritating guests. The man is heavy set to the point of being a fat ass and salesman bullshit spews from his jowls. Meanwhile, the female guest is eating everything in the house: pictures, flowers, vases, and even the furniture. The two demand Ogner to feed them—which he grudgingly agrees to—but when the man relieves himself (basically opening his gut and letting a horde of little ants with fat guy heads) our host blows his stack and roasts the two for his next meal. I really like the fact that one of the sorrows happens to be employment. The second half of the book is a collection of short stories just as morbid and strange as the sorrows. I must admit, in a twisted way, that I really like this romp through Goldfarb's sicko fantasy camp, and, in a stranger way, seem to—in some places—commiserate with the characters. If you like to giggle over drippy things, then this is a must

read. (Wonderella Printed, 1204 Neilson St., Berkeley, CA 94706, www.wonderella.com, www.ognerstump.com)

PUBLICK OCCURANCES #10

By Danny Martin, \$2.00 U.S. or trade

This little dude is an art study of the class of 1925 at a training high school in Illinois. That's right. No words, just a high school year book done with sketches. This truly is a piece of art. I'm not sure if I'm supposed to frame it or keep it with my other stash to just sit and look at. Forty squares of some of the most solemn faces I've ever seen, with the occasional ever-so slim trace of a smile. The faces stare back, almost asking "Have you seen me lately?" This little book gets more powerful every time I flip through it. I start to search for answers to questions nobody is asking of me, who are these people, and what happened to them? It's strange, the power a book that contains no words can have. (bullmooseallstar@yahoo.com)

NATE RELOCATES #2

By Nathan, \$2.00 U.S. or stamps and trade

All right Nate, I read it fast because that's the way you wrote it. This guy really gets around and lives the collage dorm lifestyle to the hilt. Nate's life is pretty interesting. If he could just slow it down a bit, I think it would be even more interesting. I may be jealous because Nate is a Banana Slug; that has got to be one of the best campuses in the state. As for Hawaii, there is just too many people coming and going for me. It would really pick my brain if there were some stories outside the hostel. (Nathan, PO Box 51245, Pacific Grove, CA 93950, natnc17@yahoo.com)

SUBALTERNATION #6&7

By Nathan? 50 cents or trade

It's strange that number six is from March 2006, and number seven is from August 2007. Seems like a long time between. The title page tells us that this is "the not obscene zine for the scene" and, in all actuality, is merely reviews of bands that seem to have some ties to Hawaii. What more can I say than if you want to know about up and coming bands from the islands, pick up *Subalternation* for a paltry fifty cents. (Subalternation, PO Box 51245, Pacific Grove, CA 93950, sendska@yahoo.com)



Photo by Kris Tripplaar

If something works, take full credit for that something,

but if it doesn't work, deny it as your own until it disappears.

THE FART PARTY

By Julia Wertz, \$12.95 U.S.

The title has really nothing to do with anything. At first, I was worried that this was going to be one of those "This is my dreary life. Woe is me," books, but it's not. Thank god. I really enjoy reading about pissed-off people and, I've got to tell you, this chick is rough. There is no fluff. This is straight, in-your-face, take it or hate it humor. Some of it is personal experience and some is just wacky humor. Who would sit in boredom, shove a number two in their eye, and say "whatever"? Well, I thought it was funny and I'm doing the review, so bite me. Much of the context is aimed at her relationship with her guy, and, for once, it makes sense because much of it is so over-the-top that it diffuses

the anger and makes for much laughter. I did notice in one panel that she reads *Angry Youth Comix*, which is probably where a fair amount of crudeness comes from (not my can of nuts, but it doesn't ruin this comic). I like this book, and as slow as I read, you can imagine how much I was laughing. Julia Wertz, you're pissed and I like it. (Atomic Book Company, 1100 W 36th St, Baltimore, MD 21211, benn@atomicbooks.com, rachel@atomicbooks.com)

THE 2007 TOP SHELF SEASONAL SAMPLER

Free, Free, Free

This is great, a free sampler of all the titles of great stuff that Top Shelf has to offer. This is the Top Shelf bible, if you

please. In the back, you find the history of what the company has put out and they also give a peek into 2008. There is a large selection of graphic novels and comics; just take your pick. I'm glad to see some of my favorite writers are adding to their volumes, and also some new stuff is coming out that catches my eye, for me to tell you about. Talk about being at the top of the heap... and all for the price of, oh yes, FREE. (Top Shelf Productions, Inc, PO Box 1282, Marietta GA 30061-1282, chris@topshelfcomix.com, www.topshelfcomix.com)

—Gary Hornberger



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THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB - CONVERTIBLE - LP or CD

Finally, the long awaited weird 4th album from these aging juggernauts. Already proclaimed the first post folk punk album. Distortion, ragtime. Instrumentals and overdub. What? YES!!! (all the old r5records also still available)

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FRIDAY KNIGHT/PANTY SHANTY - SPLIT 7"

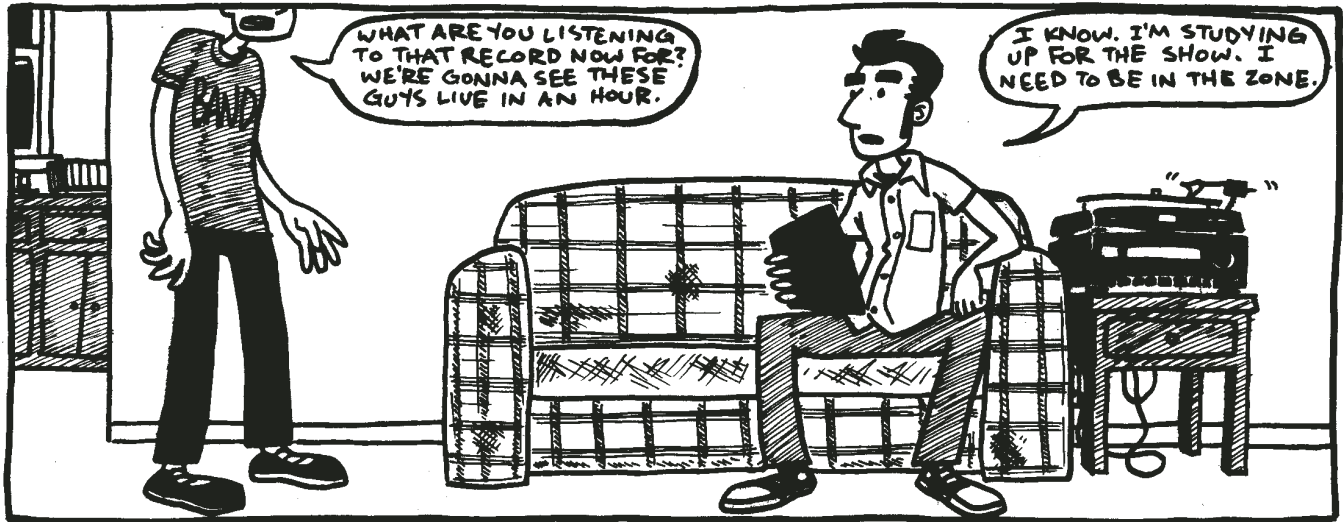
Two awesome Chattanooga bands. Worth it for the art alone, but wait, there's more...it's fuckin sweet!

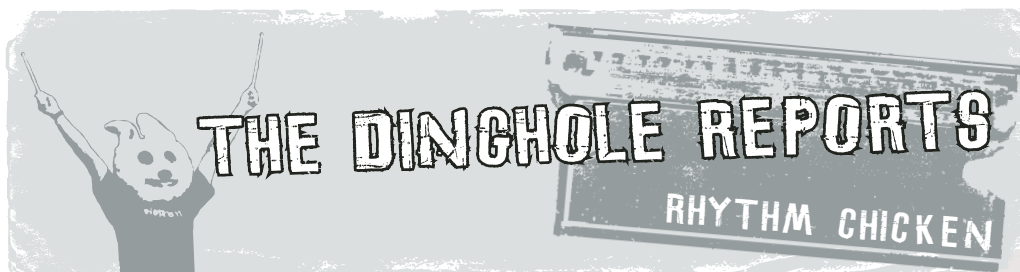
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NOTHING NICE TO SAY BY MITCH CLEM





“Some well-spirited locals were riding innertubes down the big hill into town, right down the middle of Highway 42.”

JJ's Blizzard Trolley

The Dinghole Reports
By The Rhythm Chicken
(Commentary by Francis Funyuns)
[Edited by Dr. Sicnarf]

WAIT! WAIT ONE MINUTE HERE! Before I can go one word further, I must acknowledge the great error I made in my last column! You may or may not have noticed that my last Dinghole Report was completely lacking in its proper label and number! Not till now have I displayed such an embarrassing lack of form and continuity. For those of you who might require such literary adornments, last issue's Dinghole Report should have been labeled as such: Dinghole Report #88: Wedding Ruckus of the Pre-Nude Variety! (Rhythm Chicken sighting #409).

[Well, Mr. Chicken. I might add that your anti-XM Radio rant was a little excessive, don't you think? – Dr. S.]

(Yeah, Chicken. I'm assuming you didn't give the channel Fungus 53 much of a chance. Did you? – F.F.)

Listen, ya no-good slick-slacks, I have a little trouble finding value in a form of radio you have to *pay* for. And then they even have a Starbucks channel. You won't be finding me shelling out my hard-earned partial unemployment check money just to hear the sounds of coffee digitally transmitted into my backwoods trailer. Can we move on now?

(So what are we gonna have to sit through this time? More parades? More drunken nudity? – F.F.)

Just sit tight, Funyuns. This time around I'm going to simply describe my last twenty-four hours for the Razor-readers. It was a very definitive day in my northwoods winter existence. Crack open a Rhinelander beer, sit back, and enjoy this day through the eyes of a chicken.

(Here we go, back to Lake Wobegon. – F.F.)

So, I woke up on my parents' couch, down in the town of Krakow (just north of Pulaski, WI). I threw together breakfast and started my car to warm it up. The temperature was just shy of fifteen degrees Fahrenheit. Once on the road, I made a quick stop at

Smurawa's Bakery in Pulaski for a tall coffee and a prune paczki. On the north end of Green Bay, my rat-trap Mitsubishi sputtered over the Tower Drive Bridge. The violent winds at that altitude made it difficult to keep my jalopy in one lane. The knuckles turned white as I clutched the wheel. I could see the black clouds advancing in the distance and knew I had to get back to my own neck of the woods.

Once north of Sturgeon Bay, I noticed the first few snowflakes landing on my windshield. Luckily, I was only thirty minutes from my destination. By the time I reached the town of Ephraim (where I work), everything was white and visibility was greatly diminished. My concerns were mild for I had made it to my job on time and in one piece. A few hours at work and my back and neck muscles eased up while some color returned to my knuckles. From time to time I would glance outside and watch inch after inch of the white stuff accumulate. The stereo was playing Paul Westerberg and I had hot drinks. It was a slow workday and I started mentally planning this here column.

At six P.M. I took down the open sign and locked the door. Paul Westerberg was replaced by Government Issue. The snow continued to fall and the wind picked up to a moaning howl as I air-drummed while mopping the floor. I didn't even want to *think* about my drive home until I was behind the wheel. When my closing duties were complete, I further stalled by opening up yesterday's *Chicago Tribune*, hot coffee in hand. The great Evel Knievel had passed away the day before. The following is an excerpt from his obituary:

“He said he used to stand in front of a motorcycle speeding directly toward him, jumping spread-eagle at the last second as the cycle and its rider flashed beneath him. In 1965, in Barstow, Calif., he didn't jump quite high enough. The motorcycle, going about 60 m.p.h., hit him square in the groin.”

I took this as some sort of inspirational dare and was soon out the back door. The conditions outdoors were nothing short of a whiteout blizzard, but I had to get home to write this column. Through eight-inch-deep snow, I crossed the parking to my rat-trap. Letting the car warm up, I was outside scraping the windows with a broken cassette

version of The Who's *Who's Next*. This tape has been my trusty window scraper for the last few winters. Here comes the new boss, same as the old boss.

Once behind the wheel, I began to feel that tightness return to my neck and back. My tires spun and spat snow all over while I managed to shimmy my car out of the lot. Once out onto the highway, I cursed the plows for having not gone through yet. I mapped out an elaborate route home which avoided any steep hills or inclines which would surely throw me into the ditch. With my car radio turned off, I soon found M.I.A.'s “There Is No Love” repeating in my head while my white knuckles jerked the steering wheel left and right. The wind and snow allowed me to see only twenty or so feet ahead of my car. Before long, I was on Old Stage Road, the home stretch, ramming snow drifts, sliding in and out of the two grooves graciously left by some recent, more capable vehicle.

My trip home, which normally takes twelve or fifteen minutes, became a very stressful forty minutes. It was with great relief that I neared my backwoods trailer. I gained speed and just sort of slid my car towards my front lawn. The Rhythm Knievel had made it home safely, groin intact. I looked at my dashboard and noticed that I'd gone through about a quarter tank of gas. My ride home had cost me about ten bucks, but I was home and in one piece. It wasn't long before my white knuckles were wrapped around the handle of a snow shovel and my back muscles tightened further.

I shoveled a path out to the mailbox. Once there, I was glad to see my first partial unemployment check of the winter. Within minutes, the wind had nearly filled in my freshly shoveled path. The shoveling would have to wait till morning. I went indoors to start thinking about dinner and writing this column. It was to be a relaxing evening, snowed in with my laptop, good tunes, and a few Polish beers. I microwaved some leftover lasagna and ate it right out of the plastic container while my laptop warmed up. Just as I opened up Microsoft Word, the phone rang. I answered, only to hear my friend Phil proclaim that he was driving the “JJ's Blizzard Trolley” (the wintertime name for his Jeep Wagoneer) and he was just now plowing down Old Stage Road to pick me up. Still not sure what to write about, I thought a few



Photo by Dan "the Eggman" Eggert

That's Wisconsin, I guess, laughing at Mother Nature in between gulps of cold beer.

pints of Hamms at JJ's would give me further inspiration. I threw on my old leather jacket and climbed aboard the blizzard trolley.

It always seems that the first really big blizzard of every Wisconsin winter draws people out to the bars en masse. The road conditions are horrible, the inches of snow

keep piling up, and everyone is out at the taverns celebrating the onset of the winter witch. That's Wisconsin, I guess, laughing at Mother Nature in between gulps of cold beer. After numerous pints at JJ's, we climbed back into the tank-like trolley and headed uptown to the Sister Bay Bowl for a few more. Some

well-spirited locals were riding innertubes down the big hill into town, right down the middle of Highway 42.

Sitting belly-up to the bar at the Bowl, I took notice how a bottle of Pabst costs three dollars. I remember a short ten years ago when I could order a 16 oz. can with a 7 oz. "Little Blue," a package deal for a mere two bucks. Asking for a Pabst would make some bartenders chuckle and comment how they might find a dusty one in the back room. Phil leaned over and asked me if I knew what I would write about once home. I leaned back and replied, "Three words: PABST IS GAY!"

Midnight was fast approaching and I had some typing to do. Over the river and through the woods, Phil's blizzard trolley brought me safely home. I staggered into my trailer and opened up the laptop, yet again. After twenty-some minutes of frantic typing, I stopped to reread what I had written. White Flag's "Suicide King" was spinning on the turntable, the snow was continually dumping outside, and I was writing utter drunken crap. After crawling to the back of my trailer, I passed out for a good four hours.

My alarm clock got me up at five A.M. and I was outside shoveling again. The plows had still not cleared my street. It was another white knuckle drive to work, where I got to shovel more snow to simply get my car into the lot. Work was slow and my drive home was a little less stressful. Once home, I opened my laptop and reread my drunken Pabst-bashing from last night. I found it quite entertaining, but then decided it would be best if I shared with you my first blizzard of the winter instead. Half-way through writing this, my phone rang. It was Phil corralling the troops for another trolley run. The Wisconsin winter is surely here.

Dinghole Report #89:

Another Fall-Fest, Another Ruckus-Fest!

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #410)

JJ's was packed. It was the Sunday night of Fall Fest, much like last year. I set up just inside the north door and let my ruckus flow. The place went nuts. My drum throne broke while I thrashed about in a drunken stupor. I was handed a pitcher of Hamms.

Dinghole Report #90:

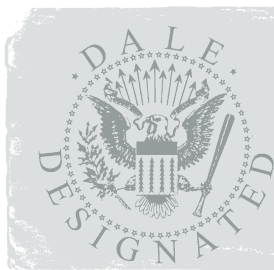
Birthday Ruckus, No Throne!

(Rhythm Chicken sightings #411 and #412)

It was the birthday of my friend Myles. I set up my Chickenkit outside of his party, out in the front yard. I was using my accordion case as a drum throne. The party filed outside to yell at the neighborhoodly sounds of my untamed ruckus. I stood and held the floor tom over my head. They all jeered as I smashed it onto the bass drum and did a back flip onto Myles' leaf-covered lawn. Myles later told me how his lawn is full of dog turds. Punk.

—Rhythm Chicken

rhythmchicken@hotmail.com



I'M AGAINST IT

DESIGNATED DALE

"Like the Ramones, Motörhead continue to influence a telephone book-size list of bands, yet either receives little to no credit."

MOTÖRHEAD

It's no small secret that I'm a hopelessly addicted Ramones fan. I've been for quite some time, thanks to my sister Julie and a group of friends I went to high school with. Before I dove headfirst into the whole punk rock thang, yours truly loved (and still loves) the classic rock bands that paved the way for the metal bands that I also got heavily into (and still love, as well). Yes, fuck you very much, Dale loves the rock and makes no qualms about fully backing the good metal, too. Any classic rock bands in particular? KISS was groundbreaking for me back in the second grade, hearing them at most of my friend's houses, and the more I heard 'em, the more I got drawn into what they were doing. I vividly remember getting a birthday card that year with \$5.00 inside sent from my grandma up in Seattle and going straight to the head shop called The Magic Mushroom at the La Mirada Mall to plunk down for KISS's *Rock And Roll Over* LP. That was it. I was fucking hooked. I started to dissect exactly what Peter Criss was doing behind the drums on those KISS records.

Later in grade school, my older brother Joe influenced me with his record collection, and I became one of the biggest Zeppelin fans in the world, right through to this day. Zeppelin drummer John Bonham is the single reason as to why I first picked up a pair of drumsticks back in the sixth grade. I haven't put them down since. Numerous drummers influenced me over the years, but Bonham remains the best of the best when it comes to rock'n'roll drumming, in my book, anyway. (See my earlier column in issue number nine on rock drummers who carved out the road for punk drummers-to-be). Other bands I got into heavily at that time in grade school besides Led Zeppelin were Black Sabbath, Jimi Hendrix, The Doors, Cheap Trick, and The Rolling Stones. With my brain reeling from these great pieces of vinyl, I was on my way.

After entering into high school in the early 80's, metal had reared its leather 'n'studded, encrusted head. Things started picking up the pace with bands like Motörhead (who've been at it since 1975), Iron Maiden, Slayer, and Metallica (let it be known here that Metallica took a big shit after their fourth and final LP, *...And Justice For All*. Every LP that followed it since eats bags of dicks for dinner). These and other metal bands gained quite some interest to my ears. Soon after, our own Art Fuentes and I had our first metal experience at the Long Beach Arena to see

Iron Maiden. We were stoked on getting to see Maiden live and weren't let down.

Unfortunately, the metal years also dragged some real doozies along with it, and things were getting beyond diluted, especially with all the bad hair metal. Ironically enough, KISS was part of this trend of bad metal fluff and were cashing in on it big time, besides dipping into the disco pool in '79 (stick with the 1974-'78 era of KISS, and you can't lose). It was around this time in high school that I started listening to the Ramones and was floored how something so simple could be so powerful and complex at the same time. It was perfect. I caught them on their next tour at the Hollywood Palladium and it knocked my dick in the dirt. That gig literally changed the way I looked at rock and roll, especially how bands should perform live and record in the studio. From then on, I've always held the Ramones in high regard when it comes to what a band should do, onstage or in a studio.

The only other band that holds its own in this sense is Motörhead. After listening to a pile of their records and going to their shows, one can get the gist of what I mean. Besides the Ramones, Motörhead is one of the few other bands that have never released a clunker LP, put on a lame show, or has strayed from the course of their career. Go ahead and lump Motörhead into the metal category, but keep this in mind: most importantly, they're one of the remaining honest-to-goodness rock'n'roll bands left on earth :yes, *real* rock'n'roll. Like the Ramones, Motörhead continue to influence a telephone book-size list of bands, yet receives little to no credit. Both bands stuck to their guns, record companies be damned. They're different bands, but the same in lots of ways. This is why I've always cited Motörhead as England's Ramones. From all the Ramones heads I've talked with in my life, Lemmy Kilmister has got to be one of the biggest fans who really knows what they were about; quote: "The Ramones were special. They were better than they knew. Don't forget them".

That said, the following is an A-Z list of songs that definitely hold their own from both bands (minus the letters that don't exist). And *play* the rest of the records where these songs come from: there's a lot more greatness to be had...

Motörhead: "Ace of Spades" / 1980 *Ace of Spades* LP

Ramones: "Animal Boy" / 1986 LP *Animal Boy* LP

"Ace of Spades" gets the crowd violently slamming no matter which time I've seen Motörhead, as "Animal Boy" did with the Ramones live.

Motörhead: "Bomber" / 1979 *Bomber* LP
Ramones: "Blitzkrieg Bop" / 1976 *RAMONES* LP

"Bomber" burns live, not to mention it had its own life-size stage rig designed after it. "Blitzkrieg Bop" introduced the world to the Ramones, giving lots of nutjobs a reason to pogo.

Motörhead: "Capricorn" / 1979 *Overkill* LP
Ramones: "Cretin Hop" / 1977 *Rocket to Russia* LP

"Capricorn" remains a great live staple with eerie guitar chord changes while "Cretin Hop" taught punks to count to eight, citing that cretins wanna hop some more and that all good cretins go to heaven.

Motörhead: "Doctor Rock" / 1986 *Orgasmatron* LP
Ramones: "Durango 95" / 1985 *Too Tough to Die* LP

"Dr. Rock," had a boot-stomping groove below lyrics about burning you like a Marshall stack. "95" was the instrumental wall of sonic damage the Ramones opened up their set with.

Motörhead: "Emergency" / 1984 *No Remorse* LP

Ramones: "Every time I Eat Vegetables It Makes Me Think of You" / 1983 *Subterranean Jungle* LP

"Emergency" is another crowd fave that gets the blood boiling and bodies moving. "Vegetables" is one of the Ramones' most silly offering of lyrics ("she turned into a head of lettuce/ she eats Thorazine in her farina"). It's also one of the longest song titles they ever penned.

Motörhead: "Fire, Fire" / 1980 *Ace of Spades* LP
Ramones: "Freak of Nature" / 1986 *Animal Boy* LP

"Fire" is a straight-ahead rocker that suggests stoking some girl higher. Oh, those great Lemmy euphemisms. "Freak of Nature" features Joey Ramone's unmistakable "Pa-pa-pa-pa-pa-pa-pa-pow! Pa-pow!"



Illustration by Ryan Gelatin

Motörhead: "Going to Brazil" / 1991 *1916* LP
 Ramones: "Gimme Gimme Shock Treatment" / 1977 *Leave Home* LP

The next time the band's in St. Louis (or wherever Chuck Berry's living these days), they need to pull him up onstage to sit in on "Going to Brazil." "Shock Treatment" is a song about an old medical procedure that was to be forgotten over the past years. Now that it's coming back, maybe the HMO's can implement this song into their TV spots.

Motörhead: "Heart of Stone" / 1982 *Iron Fist* LP
 Ramones: "High Risk Insurance" / 1980 *End of the Century* LP

"Heart of Stone" features guitarist Fast Eddie Clarke ripping it up at a frenzied speed, while "High Risk Insurance" has drummer Marky ripping it up in producer Phil Spector's Gold Star studios.

Motörhead: "Iron Fist" / 1982 *Iron Fist* LP
 Ramones: "I'm Against It" / 1978 *Road to Ruin* LP
 Classic Motörhead roar with "Iron Fist," and "I'm Against It" is quite possibly the most near-perfect Ramones song ever.

Motörhead: "Jailbait" / 1980 *Ace of Spades* LP
 Ramones: "Judy Is a Punk" / 1976 *Ramones* LP
 Fifteen'll get ya twenty, Lemmy. "Judy" sounds underage, too. Both are great blasts, tho.

Motörhead: "Killed by Death" / 1984 *No Remorse* LP

Ramones: "(The) KKK Took My Baby Away" / 1981 *Pleasant Dreams* LP
 Lemmy howls on this one and "KKK" was rumored to be about Johnny.

Motörhead: "Live to Win" / 1980 *Ace of Spades* LP
 Ramones: "Listen to My Heart" / 1976 *RAMONES* LP

How good? It's tattooed on Lemmy's arm. Dee Dee's back-ups on "Listen to My Heart" are fucking great, just like on "Judy Is a Punk."

Motörhead: "Motörhead" / 1977 *Motörhead* LP
 Ramones: "Mama's Boy" / 1985 *Too Tough to Die* LP
 Lemmy's song had born unto him the name of his new band. "Mama's Boy" has some fun lyrics fo' sho', jellybean brain.

Motörhead: "No Class" / 1979 *Overkill* LP
 Ramones: "Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue" / 1976 *Ramones* LP
 "No Class" is a classic and "Sniff Some Glue" sure scared a lot of unknowing folks back then.

Motörhead: "Overkill" / 1979 *Overkill* LP
 Ramones: "Outsider" / 1983 *Subterranean Jungle* LP
 Bass from hell on "Overkill." "Outsider" is one of Dee Dee's greatest.

Motörhead: "Poison" / 1979 *Bomber* LP
 Ramones: "Pinhead" / 1977 *Leave Home* LP
 Not about the lame hair metal band or the movie *Hellraiser*.

Motörhead: (Nada songs starting with "Q.")
 Ramones: "Questioningly" / 1978 *Road to Ruin* LP
 Joey at his pop finest. Good shit.

Motörhead: "R.A.M.O.N.E.S." / 1991 *1916* LP
 Ramones: "Rock 'N' Roll High School" / 1980 *End of the Century* LP
 Lemmy's tribute to his friends (who actually ended up performing it themselves), and "RNRHS" is a tribute to what HS *should* be like.

Motörhead: "Sacrifice" / 1995 *Sacrifice* LP
 Ramones: "Sheena Is a Punk Rocker" / 1977 *Rocket to Russia* LP
 Crazy rhythm section on "Sacrifice." "Sheena" is a true classic from the '70s.

Motörhead: "The Hammer" / 1980 *Ace of Spades* LP
 Ramones: "Teenage Lobotomy" / 1977 *Rocket to Russia* LP
 "The Hammer" does just that. "Teenage Lobotomy" still gets the fists pumping.

Motörhead: "Under the Knife" / 1984 *No Remorse* LP
 Ramones: "Unhappy Girl" / 2002 *Subterranean Jungle* re-release CD
 "Under the Knife" and "Unhappy Girl" are the ones that almost got away. Fantastic studio outtakes on the *Subterranean Jungle* re-release, by the way. Highly recommended.

Motörhead: "Vibrator" / 1977 *Motörhead* LP
 Ramones: (Zero songs starting with "V.")
 It isn't a song about *that*, is it? Oh, yeah. Great song and lyrics.

Motörhead: "We Are Motörhead" / 2000 *We Are Motörhead* LP
 Ramones: "We're a Happy Family" / 1977 *Rocket to Russia* LP
 Motörhead's still here and *still* not apologizing for what they do best. "We're a Happy Family" paints a crazy-ass portrait of a Queens family in NY and dysfunction. Was a great Ramones show ender, this one.

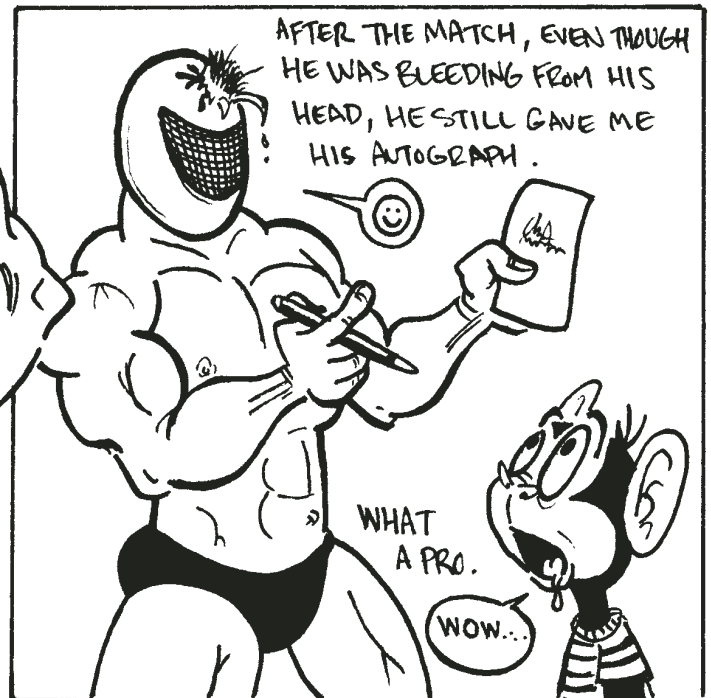
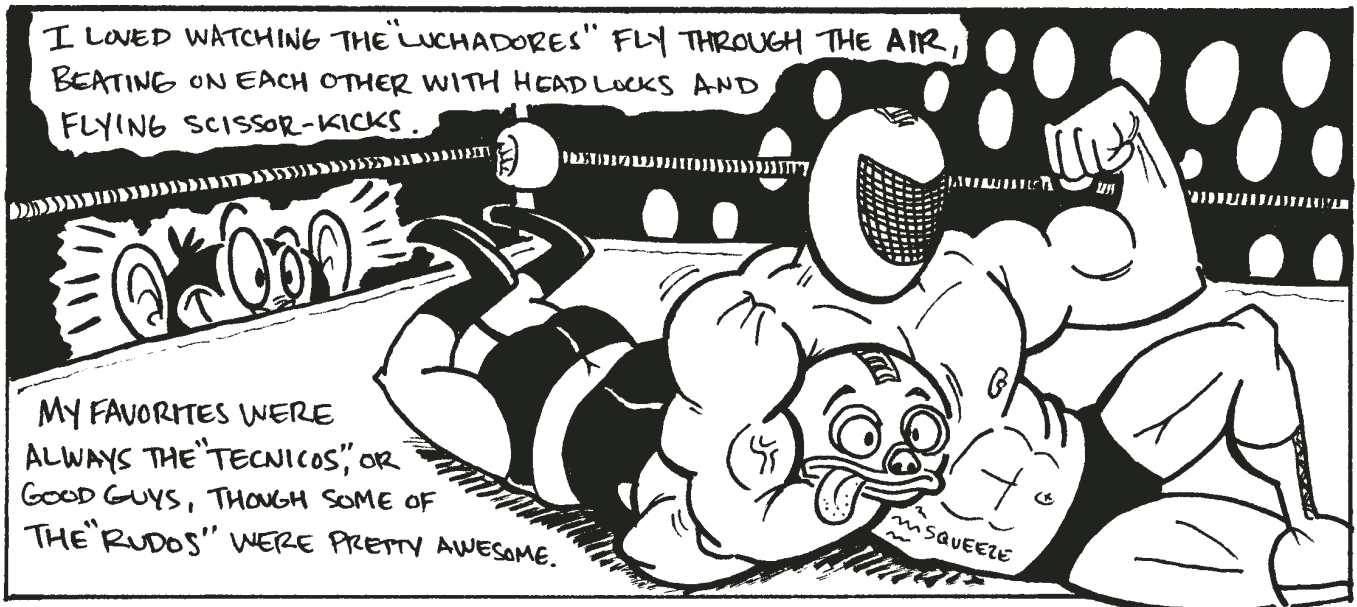
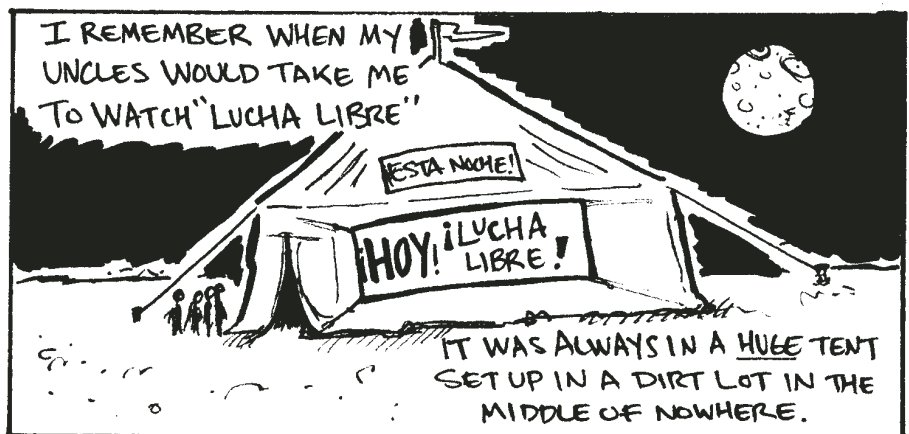
Motörhead: (Nope. No songs startin' with "X.")
 Ramones: (And none for los Ramones, either.)

Motörhead: "Young and Crazy" / 2001 *Iron Fist* re-release CD
 Ramones: "You're Gonna Kill That Girl" / 1977 *Leave Home* LP
 "Young and Crazy" is the fiery re-recorded instrumental of "Sex and Outrage" from the *Iron Fist* re-release. "You're Gonna Kill That Girl" mixes '50s doo-wop with serial killer-inspired, punk rock annihilation.

Motörhead: (Zip songs starting with "Z.")
 Ramones: "Zero Zero UFO" / 1989 *Brain Drain* LP
 A great tune from a way-underrated Ramones LP (the last Dee Dee was to perform on). My old pals The Living End (the band from L.A., not that other lame band) performed a version of it.

I'm Against It
 -Designated Dale
 Designateddale@yahoo.com

AND IN THIS
CORNER...
**¡CHICO...
SI-I-I-MIO!**
-ART.



Won Ton Not Now

By Kyoohi

Previously in Won Ton Not Now a young couple in love were on an enchanted date, everything seemed perfect when things went suddenly sour. The girl was revealed to be the monster Bulmya and now the boy appears to not be what he seems as the battle escalates...

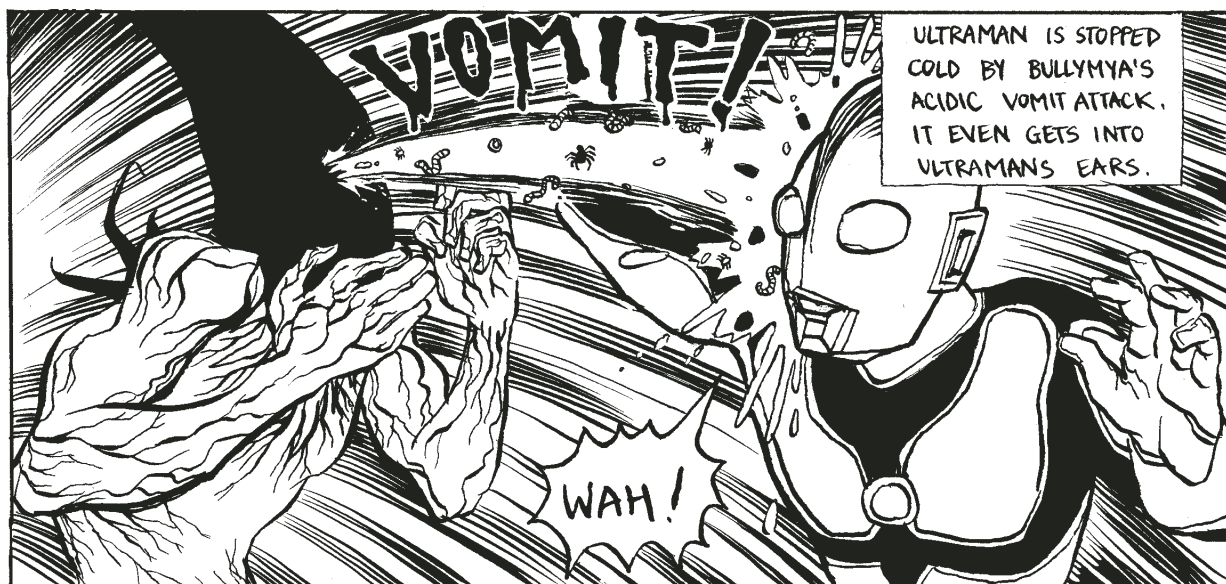
Part three of a love story told in four parts entitled Cobra vs. Mongoose Forever.



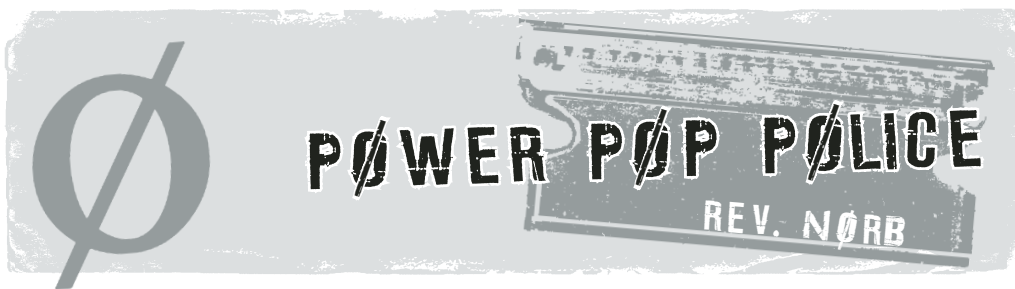
SHOOT, THAT'S GROSS



©円谷プロ



To be concluded in Razorcate #43.



“England: A country which names their tube stations after rock lyrics.”

DOWN IN OR NEAR THE TUBE STATION AT OR AROUND MIDNIGHT

OR I GET MY KICKS IN STEPNEY, NOT IN KNIGHTSBRIDGE ANYMORE. YOU?

So anyway, i got this job making video games. It's kinda time intensive. After, like, a year of blood, tears, toil and sweat, our company's first game got released on Xbox® Live Arcade. Said game shall not be named within these pages; it is not likely worth your while to seek it out. Those doing so will find very little evidence of the Hand O' Nørb within it, although the game was originally my idea. Essentially, once everyone who ((cough)) knew how to do things better than i did had their say, the game was a middling lump of undistinguished mediocrity, receiving reviews so bad i would swear that i had written them myself ((although we *did* outsell *Shrek-N-Roll* two weeks running now. Surely there must be some resin-hit of punkness therein!)). Now, i can assure you, had i the *carte blanche* authority on the project that i ((Handsome Dick Manitoba voice)) **SO RICHLY DESERVE** ((normal voice)), the game would have likely still wound up a lump of mediocrity, given the fact that i have no prior experience in the industry, and, quite frankly, am not a noteworthy passionate gamer. **HOWEVER**, i can **GOD DAMN MOTHER SLAPPIN' DOUBLE-DANG ASSURE YOU** that it would have been a **REALLY FUCKING OFF THE WALL** lump of mediocrity in that case—the kind of thing that at least left a “what the **FUCK** were they thinking???” kind of impression, rather than the “how the hell did this lame game even get **MADE**?” kind of impression that it is currently making. I cannot really complain overmuch about this state of affairs, since one of the reasons i went into the video game industry was that i **DON'T** have the same amount of passion and conviction about the medium as i do with, say, music or writing—therefore i am far more than willing to compromise my principles in order to make a living. **PUNK!** Wait... let me think about that... hmmm, yes, **PUNK! I HAVE SPARED THE WORLD THE GREAT INDIGNITY OF COMPROMISING MY MUSIC OR WRITING, AND HAVE, INSTEAD, MERELY COMPROMISED MY PRINCIPLES IN A FIELD WHICH NOBODY COOL ACTUALLY CARES ABOUT!!! IT'S A WIN-WIN SITUATION, BAY-BEE!!!** But, yes, that's what i do these days. And, in the course of my duties, i recently wound up flying to England, in order to converse with

some programmers in Cambridge ((home of Pink Floyd, the Soft Boys, and Katrina & The Waves. One suspects the region suffers under continual shortfall of red meat, testosterone, and Rose Tattoo albums)). In any event, i conduct my business, results are satisfactory, and i look at my plane ticket home ((“home,” in this case, meaning “Chicago,” which is a horrible indignity that any globally traveling Wisconsinite suffers: For all intents and purposes, once overseas, the entire state of Wisconsin becomes a *de facto* suburb of Chicago, though not to the extent that i need to pay \$1.50 to drive home from work)). My plane leaves Heathrow Airport in London at 7 AM. Nice. Unfortunately, i am fifty or sixty miles north of London. Assuming that i swallow the state dictum that international travelers need to arrive at the airport two hours early, that means i need to get to Heathrow at 5 AM, or thereabouts. Alas, the first train doesn't leave Cambridge *until* 5 AM. It's a 45 minute train ride from Cambridge to the King's Cross station in London, then it's another 45 minute tube ride from King's Cross to Heathrow. In other words, in order for me to get to the airport in time to catch my flight, i need to leave Cambridge on a 3:30 AM train. No such train exists. I am going to have to take the *last* train out of Cambridge the night before ((11:19 PM)), get to King's Cross just after midnight, take the tube to Heathrow, and then sit at the fucking airport for six hours until my flight leaves. I email my boss. I tell him to find me a later flight. He tells me, in essence, to fuck off. So, bolstered by ale, the best chicken vindaloo i've ever eaten, and a few weak gasps of those stupid half-grass, half-tobacco joints they roll in the UK, i board the 11:19 train to King's Cross. I am well aware of the implications of this act: I will, by any lunatic's yardstick, be **DOWN IN THE TUBE STATION AT MIDNIGHT** ((actually, i'll be down in the tube station at 12:04. But who's counting?)). Surely, being hardy punk rockers, and not lame gamers, you are well aware of the reference: Bringing The Jam's “All Mod Cons” album to a soul-crushing conclusion, “Down In The Tube Station At Midnight” relates, first-person style, the tale of some young and curry-laden husband's fatal mugging while he is ((as one might imagine)) down in the tube station at

midnight. This song—while admittedly adding to the band's trend of distancing itself from the raucous, punky-moddy roots of the “In The City” album—had a lasting and profound impact on pretty much anybody who listened to it Back In The Day. My late buddy and bandmate Perry made a great art class pencil drawing about the song once, based on the verse “*And the last thing that i saw / lying there on the floor / was 'Jesus Saves' painted by some atheist nutter / and a British Rail poster reading 'Have an Awayday, a Cheap Holiday, Do It Today'*”, except the teacher made him erase the “**JESUS SAVES**” painted by the atheist nutter. But, yeah. Anyone who heard the song—at least, like, twenty-five or thirty years ago or whatever—was deeply impacted by it. They did not rock this one in vain, trust me. In any event, towards the end of the song, when the dude is already left for dead, and the muggers have taken his keys and wallet, and are heading for his home, Mr. Paul Weller begins augmenting the calls of “**DOWN IN THE TUBE STATION AT MIDNIGHT!**” with prefaces of “**DON'T EVER GO**”—that is to say, the message conveyed is “**DON'T EVER GO DOWN IN THE TUBE STATION AT MIDNIGHT!**” I am due to arrive at the tube station at exactly four minutes after midnight. Well, what the hell, maybe all the bad folks turn into pumpkins at 12:01 and i'm three minutes to the good? Maybe they all started getting their kicks in Stepney, not in Knightsbridge anymore? I mean, shit, if you're fifteen years old, and some guy tells you **DON'T EVER GO** somewhere, and you believe him passionately, because you don't realize that a few years later he'll wind up forming the Style Council, and you—**DESPITE YOUR SINCERE EFFORTS TO THE CONTRARY**—wind up going to that **EXACT** place and damn near that **EXACT** time you were told not to go there like twenty-seven years ago, well, why... it eats at a fella's steely reserve, i tell you. In any event, my train pulls into the King's Cross station at 12:04 AM. As i exit the train and head for the subway, i steel myself for the assaults of those who smell of pubs and Wormwood Scrubs and too many right-wing meetings which are certain to be visited upon my person. I am actually confronted with a problem of a far different nature: The “tube,”



Illustration by Kiyoshi Nakazawa

surely there must be some
resin-hit of punkness therein!



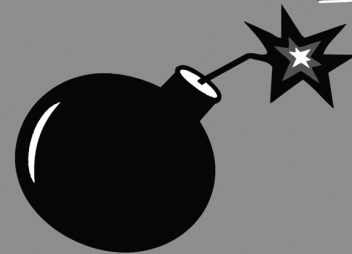
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The fact that it was likely the wrong place to get off sunk in quickly, once i realized i was standing in a pile of broken glass.



way several days before?” Well, yes and no. What i’m actually saying is that, being a man of ((Manitoba Voice again)) **ROCK AND ROLL** ((back to normal)), any location you’ve ever actually heard expressed in the lyrics of a song becomes **SACRED AND UNFORGETTABLE** in your mind. At least it should. Therefore, when my bus passed a sign mentioning “**KNIGHTSBRIDGE**,” it was child’s play to remember that i had seen the same sign on my way from the airport to the train station, and was going in the right direction—i mean, come **ON**, who doesn’t remember the line “now she gets her kicks in Stepney, not in Knightsbridge anymore” from “Play With Fire” by the Rolling Stones? ((i actually also passed near Stepney at some point in my journeys. After a LOT of analysis, i have determined that i still have **NO FUCKING IDEA** what the social significance of the Stepney v. Knightsbridge remark means)). But, i mean, the London tube system is amazingly **FULL** of rock references: Continuing on the “Play With Fire” tip, i saw “St. John’s Wood” ((as in “your mother, she’s an heiress / owns a block in St. John’s Wood”)) on a map, and as my bus passed a sign for Wardour Street ((i believe the song “A-Bomb in Wardour Street” immediately preceded “Down In The Tube Station At Midnight” on “All Mod Cons”)), it only served to reinforce something i’ve known for a long time: Any real-world location that is referenced in song lyrics is a **SACRED** and **HALLOWED** place, made immortal by its mere inclusion into the warp and weave of Rock’s Rich Tapestry. I mean, even though i don’t **UNDERSTAND** the social implications of Knightsbridge, i know that the stop **AFTER** that is South Kensington, which, of course, was mentioned in Donovan’s song “Sunny South Kensington.” And i know that if you go a bit north of that, you come to Shepherd’s Bush, which has some bearing on the Peel Sessions version of Generation X’s cover of John Lennon’s “Gimme Some Truth,” because Billy Idol starts ranting and raving about people with “Shepherd’s Bush accents” and the like. I have **NO IDEA** what a Shepherd’s Bush accent is, nor what it means to me, Al Franken, but the very fact that i know it exists, thanks to rock & roll, is amazingly **PRECIOUS** and **VITAL** to me. If you ride around on London public transit for

long enough, you see dozens of places you have **HEARD** of—places you ((if you are like me)) ((which is, i suppose, not a great bet)) treat as almost mystical in nature—but have no idea of the significance of. **BRENT CROSS!** That 999 b-side so obscure i can’t even sing it off the top of my head! **CLAPHAM COMMON!** As in that Squeeze song that went “*I never thought it would happen / between me and the girl from Clapham / Outside the windy common / That night i’ve not forgotten*” or even **DAGENHAM**, as in the Stranglers song “Dagenham Dave” ((“*i don’t wanna cry / i swear he hit that water high*”))! There’s **WATERLOO** ((as in the Kinks)), **PICCADILLY CIRCUS** ((as in the last song off the third Stiff Little Fingers album)) and **COVENT GARDEN** ((as in the Green Bay band of no lasting consequence))! If you head northeast, you get **LEYTON** ((as in the Leyton Buzzards)), **BETHNAL GREEN** ((as in either that band Bethnal, or the Cockney Rejects song that goes “*take a walk around Bethnal Green, beat up my landlord, wow, maybe*”)), and, of course, **WEST HAM**, home of the Cockney Rejects’ favorite footballers ((i have adopted the claret and blue of West Ham United’s Irons as my own, although, truth be told, i have only seen like two soccer games in my life, and West Ham pretty much suck, from what i can gather)). England: A country which names their tube stations after rock lyrics. Be that as it may, having no real idea where “Hammersmif” is in the great scheme of things ((i assumed i would either see a huge sign that said “**ODEON**” or a pack of gorillas)) ((yes, that is another punk rock reference. “Gorilla Got Me” and all like that. Please make a note of it)), i wound up getting off the bus at a **COMPLETELY** incorrect bus stop. The fact that it was likely the wrong place to get off sunk in quickly, once i realized i was standing in a pile of broken glass. In any event, the signs said “**HAMMERSMITH**” and “**FULHAM**,” even though i was quite unclear as to whether i was actually **IN** those places, or i was just near a bus that might **TAKE** me to one of those places, assuming the buses in these famous places run ‘round the clock. Naturally, remembering the Lurkers “Fulham Fallout” LP, i did what any self-respecting ex-fourteen-year-old would do in my situation: I stood around for a while, trying to

pretend that i was **IN** the Lurkers, getting my picture taken for the album cover. That didn’t work well, since, after all, the “Fulham Fallout” album cover is a **PAINTING**, not a photograph, and they were standing around in what seemed to be a friggin’ **COW** pasture, not a bus stop full of graffiti and broken glass, so how can i really be sure i’m in Fulham and not in—i dunno—fuggin’ **STEPNEY** or something? As i ruminate upon these great implications, some crazy English dude comes scuttling up to me. I am 99.9% certain that he is that selfsame atheist nutter who wrote “**JESUS SAVES**” on the wall of Perry’s tube station. He asks me for a smoke, in the common tongue of the people. I reply that i am a non-smoker, and cannot help him. He fishes around in the broken glass for a while, eventually reclaiming a mid-size cigarette butt with a little life left in it. He then asks if i can at least help him out with matches, or a light or something. I inform him that, as a non-smoker, i have no lighter, no cigarettes, no matches. He looks me in the eyes with pleading sincerity: “**WHAT HAPPENED, LAD???**” I inform him that nothing *happened*, that my being without cigarette and lighter and match is merely the way of nature. He then asks me if i drink, which i confirm. He informs me that he’s got a few beers back at his place, which is only a few blocks this way ((points in some crazy fashion)). I decline the opportunity to get mugged in some Limey shantytown. Eventually, the bus comes, and i am able to navigate my way to Hammersmif, and then to Heefrow ((which, of course, was itself mentioned in a Flamin’ Groovies song)). I wind up at the airport at 3 AM, meaning that i spent almost three full hours riding buses after midnight in London in order to get to the airport. I am exhilarated by the fact that i have seen so many lyrically significant subway and bus stops during my journey. I muse about the fates of those who are cast into similar situations without an encyclopedic knowledge of rock references to guide them. I assume they get lost and killed a lot.

Love,
Norb



A MONKEY TO RIDE THE DOG

SEAN CARSWELL

“What the *New York Times* ignored was the fact that ‘cracker’ is also a term used for a person born in Florida.”

IF YOU'RE THE OWNER OF THE WASHINGTON REDSKINS, YOU'RE NO LONGER A COCK

It's been six or seven years now since I first heard the Atom And His Package song “If You Own the Washington Redskins, You're a Cock,” and it still flows through my mind again and again when Fall rolls around and my thoughts turn to football. Echoing the first lines of the song, I, too, like sports, so there are some things I force myself to miss. The biggest of these things that I try to ignore is the nickname of my favorite team: the Seminoles. Now, when I watch pro football, I'll get into the game. I'll root like hell for certain teams. I have favorites who I root for year after year. I get swept away in the action. But when the game is over, all those emotions fade pretty quickly. If the team I'm rooting for loses, I just shrug my shoulders and think, what the hell? It's just a game played by millionaires.

It's different with the Seminoles, because they're the team that represents the college I got my bachelor's from: Florida State University. I have great memories of those times at FSU. Those years opened my mind to whole new ways of thinking. The stuff I learned at FSU taught me how to escape the construction sites of my youth and move on to a lifestyle that's more in line with my personality. Plus, college is the place where you can indulge in booze, drugs, and sex with random people—all with impunity. Good times. And FSU football seemed to float around in the atmosphere of those good times. So now I watch the games and it ties me to an earlier, fun part of my life and I get swept away. When they win, I'm totally stoked. And when they lose, it ruins my day. Or, at least, a few hours of it. Either way, I love watching the games.

Still, it bugs me that they're nicknamed “The Seminoles.”

Last year, the governing body of college sports insisted that schools drop their Native American team nicknames. Most of the universities complied. In the case of FSU, the actual Seminole tribe stepped forward and defended Florida State. The Seminoles' (the tribe) argument being that they liked that FSU was nicknamed after them and didn't want the name changed. One official statement from the Seminole tribe stated that the tribe should judge whether or not the nickname was offensive, and that stripping Florida State of the nickname would be one more example of white people deciding what's best for the Native Americans.

Okay. Fair enough. I'll be one white guy staying out of it. Mostly.

Because there is one other thing. In January, 2001, FSU played in the Orange Bowl for the national championship against the University of Oklahoma. Oklahoma whipped Florida State 13-2. It was a brutal, punishing game. Florida State couldn't mount any offense. Oklahoma controlled the field. In the end, there was no doubt who the national champions were.

Later that month, I drove through Oklahoma, through the northern part of the state where the Seminole reservation still stands. As I rode along the interstate, I thought of the history of Oklahoma, how it was the territory that the United States gave to Native Americans during the nineteenth century. Then, President Benjamin Harrison decided that he wanted Oklahoma for white people and opened it up for U.S. settlers. On March 2, 1889, any American homesteader who wanted to could race into Native American lands and claim it for their own. By the time that the homesteaders raced in, though, more than half the land had already been claimed by tougher, meaner Americans who had gone into Oklahoma early (and illegally) and claimed their land. These homesteaders who jumped the gun on taking all the Native American land and claiming it for themselves were called Sooners. Many years later, the University of Oklahoma nicknamed their football team the Sooners, after the very people who raced onto the Seminole reservation and claimed the land for themselves.

I thought of the battle between the Seminoles and Sooners again, in a new, historical context. It was a brutal, punishing affair. The Seminoles couldn't mount any offense. The Sooners controlled the field. In the end, there was no doubt who the national champions were.

That's kinda fucked up.

I notice these types of dual meanings around Native American nicknamed teams and athletic competitions all the time. This October in Major League Baseball, the Yankees and the Indians faced off in the playoffs. The Yankees have long dominated our national pastime. The Indians won this October. They didn't end up making it to the World Series, though. So once again, the Indians won a battle but lost the war. In fact,

the Indians haven't won the championship since 1917. The Yankees have won it twenty-six times since then.

So I notice these things and get a little bothered when the Yankees and the Indians battle for supremacy in the national pastime, or when the Sooners wipe out the Seminoles in a ground-acquisition game and thereby are crowned national champions. I guess I'm not the only one who notices, though.

On October 28, 2007, the New England Patriots battled the Washington Redskins in professional football. Not only did the Redskins lose, but the Patriots slaughtered the Redskins. The game stirred up quite a bit of controversy in the sports media because the Patriots, once they had clearly won, decided to stay on the offensive and run up the score. They wiped the Redskins out. The Redskins hadn't been treated this brutally, hadn't been beaten this badly, since 1961.

It was too much for Daniel Snyder, the owner of the Redskins. The double entendres started to get to him. It was one thing to have a team nickname that is the racist term used by the aggressors in one of the largest genocides in human history. It was another thing to use that nickname in Washington, DC, the capitol city of the government that committed the genocide. But when a team named after the aggressors—the Patriots—and coming from the seat of European colonization in North America—New England—wipes out your ethnic-slur-nicknamed team, it's too much. Snyder couldn't take it.

I'm sure you've heard about what happened next. It's been in the news for a couple of months, now. Anderson Cooper did a four-part special on it in November. For weeks, Bill O'Reilly has geared his talking points against the “PC Police” behind Snyder's act. Apparently, Rush Limbaugh won't shut up about it. Even President Bush got involved, but we'll talk about that later. In case you missed all of this, though, I'll tell you the two controversial things that Snyder did.

First, he decided to change the name of the Redskins.

This may not sound like such a big deal. The University of Hawaii changed their nickname from the Rainbows to the Warriors in the nineties. They never said why they made this change, only claiming that they'd always been “the Rainbow Warriors” and

they were just focusing on the second part of the nickname more these days. It's pretty clear, though, that they've shied away from the Rainbows because it was, well, too gay. The city of Washington, DC, has a history of changing their team nicknames, too. The Washington Bullets became the Wizards because a city that frequently had the highest per-capita murder rate was uncomfortable with a team nicknamed after the agent of death. Even the NFL is no stranger to name changes. In 1998, the Tennessee Oilers became the Tennessee Titans because fans wanted a new nickname. So if teams can ditch nicknames for being too gay, too violent, or just too unrepresentative of Tennessee, then surely it shouldn't cause a stir to change a nickname for being too racist.

But it did stir a lot of controversy. Perhaps part of the reason had to do with the idea of Political Correctness. Bill O'Reilly, in his many rants, asked where the line would be drawn. Would the Vikings have to change their nickname, lest they offend the Norwegian population of Minneapolis? Would Catholics mount an offensive against the New Orleans Saints? Daniel Snyder defended his decision on Bill O'Reilly's show. Snyder explained that the line should be drawn at genocide. The Vikings and Saints were okay, according to Snyder, because our government didn't try to wipe them off the face of the earth. Our government did try to do that to the "Redskins." "So that's where I draw the line," Snyder said. O'Reilly called Snyder a "language nazi" and insisted that the producer turn off Snyder's microphone.

Fans were upset about the change, too. Apparently, they were endeared to the mascot. So endeared, that before the name change, the Redskins were the second most profitable NFL franchise, second only to the Cowboys. That's right. The Cowboys and Redskins were the two most profitable logos. The rivalry between the Cowboys and Redskins has long been one of the bitterest rivals in all of pro sports. So when Snyder announced that they would no longer be using the image of the chief (or, really, the image of a tan, Italian-looking guy with feathers on his head) as their mascot, fans were irate. "What about the long, rich tradition of Redskin football?" they asked. Snyder answered this question on the Rush Limbaugh show, saying, "Maybe we shouldn't embrace this tradition of racism." Limbaugh responded with a rant that he apparently is still reverting back to when he has a free moment between bashing Hillary Clinton and trying to blur the name Obama with the name Osama.

The second thing Snyder did was even more surprising: he renamed the Redskins the Washington Crackers.

You've probably heard about this, too. You probably heard all the jokes about the new mascot looking just like George W. Bush with a mesh-back ball cap on. You've probably heard about Bush embracing the new mascot because at least it turns attention away from the fiasco of a war he's running. Maybe you've read the *New York Times* editorial where they pointed out that



Illustration by Brad Beshaw

"cracker" was originally a derogatory term used by slaves to describe the guys cracking the whip, so it's probably more hateful to African Americans than to whites. Maybe you've heard about Washington Crackers running back Clinton Portis demanding to be traded because, as he said, "I don't want to be a cracker ass cracker." Surely, you've at least seen the T-shirts floating around with that phrase on them.

I, for one, embrace the name change. What the *New York Times* ignored was the fact that "cracker" is also a term used for a person born in Florida. In Florida, it's actually possible to be African American and a cracker. I think it's great, too, that Florida's rich history of rigged elections, corrupt politicians, and cranky old people

is now celebrated by the nation's capitol's football team. I think it's great that Snyder has allocated one skybox for the nation's truckers. I think it's great that he's increased RV parking at FedEx stadium, and that concession stands there are now required to sell boiled peanuts. I look forward to learning the new lyrics that have turned "Hail the Redskins" into "Hail the Crackers." And though I've always been a fan of the Miami Dolphins, who knows? Maybe next season, you'll see me rocking my mesh-back hat and rooting for the Crackers.

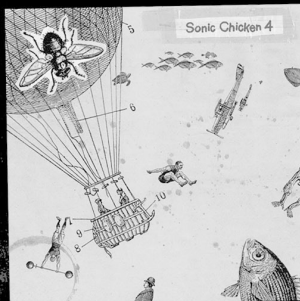
—Sean Carswell



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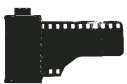
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Dan Monick's Photo Page

Atmosphere show, Los Angeles, 10/02/07

DOO
DOOLA
DOO
DOO...

DOO
DOO!

WHO ARE YOU?

Photo by Jason Margolis



"Nardwuar: That's totally punk! I mean who else would say, 'I love punk' in *Shape* magazine? Thank you for spreading the word on punk. Hilary: Oh, you're welcome!"

Nardwuar the Human Serviette Vs. Hilary Duff

Nardwuar: Who are you?

Hilary: Who are you?

Nardwuar: I'm Nardwuar The Human Serviette.

Hilary: Nice!

Nardwuar: Hilary Duff, welcome to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada!

Hilary: Thank you! It's good to be here.

Nardwuar: Now, in other parts of Canada, you were serving up chicken stew! Tell me about that, the chicken stew!

Hilary: It was actually turkey.

Nardwuar: What was going on there?

Hilary: Well, we were feeding the homeless. We were at this Hope Mission and it was really fun. We spent about two hours serving lunch.

Nardwuar: What were people drinking? Is there Hilary Duff water? I've heard there's Hilary Duff water!

Hilary: You have? How'd you hear that? I've never heard of that.

Nardwuar: Trim Line was going to do some sort of water. Hilary Duff water.

Hilary: Really? Wow that would be cool.

Nardwuar: What would Hilary Duff water taste like? What does Hilary Duff taste like?

Hilary: Probably strawberries. Strawberry water! What would your water taste like?

Nardwuar: I think it would be something close to cheese. I love cheese. Do you love cheese?

Hilary: I love cheese too and I'm not supposed to eat it, as I sing, so that's good. So maybe like Brie-flavored water?

Nardwuar: That would be pretty gross, I think.

Hilary: Really?

Nardwuar: Actually, I would enjoy that. I'm addicted to brie. Do you have a disease? Are you addicted to cheese?

Hilary: I am, yes.

Nardwuar: One item that has a lot of cheese on it, Hilary Duff, is the McDonald's Happy Meal.

Hilary: A Happy Meal?

Nardwuar: Yes, and you were part of a McDonald's Happy Meal with *Lizzie McGuire*. What was that like being in a Happy Meal?

Hilary: I was? I didn't know that, but I'm glad to be a part of a Happy Meal and make some people happy!

Nardwuar: Right over here, Hilary Duff, I have something I'd like to ask you about. These gentlemen right here [Nardwuar pulls out a picture], how do they play into the

Hilary Duff story? Do you know?

Hilary: I don't know, no.

Nardwuar: Look at them closely, these gentlemen right here, they play into the Hilary Duff story.

Hilary: They do? How is that?

Nardwuar: There was a certain band, from Omaha, Nebraska that might have helped inspire your new album!

Hilary: Really? Hmm.

Nardwuar: A band called The Faint...

Hilary: The Faint!

Nardwuar: This is The Faint.

Hilary: You know what; I couldn't tell you what The Faint look like.

Nardwuar: This is what The Faint look like!

Hilary: Good to know.

Nardwuar: Tell me about The Faint, Hilary Duff.

Hilary: Well, The Faint, I listened to one of their records quite a lot. I never knew what they looked before, but now I guess I do.

Nardwuar: Didn't they do some remixing for you as well?

Hilary: They did. They remixed the song "Play with Fire," I believe.

Nardwuar: So this is what Hilary Duff looks like and this is what The Faint look like.

Hilary: Yes. Don't we look like twins?

Nardwuar: Hilary Duff, here we have, and I think this is really interesting; here [Nardwuar pulls out a magazine] we have you, on the cover of...

Hilary: *Shape* magazine!

Nardwuar: What I find very interesting about this, if you could open it up for a second here to page 74, and we go on your playlist, what do we see there? Are you ashamed to show the photos in *Shape*?

Hilary: No, I'm not ashamed at all.

Nardwuar: What I think is interesting here is that you have "I love punk." You are saying, "I love punk" in *Shape* magazine.

Hilary: Is that wrong?

Nardwuar: No! That's totally punk! I mean who else would say, "I love punk" in *Shape* magazine? Thank you for spreading the word on punk.

Hilary: Oh, you're welcome!

Nardwuar: So you do love to punk then, don't you Hilary Duff?

Hilary: I do love some punk music, yes.

Nardwuar: So I thought I'd give you a little gift right here. And what we have is a punk rock calendar! This is for you. [Nardwuar gives Hilary a punk rock calendar.]

Hilary: Thank you!

Nardwuar: A Nardwuar The Human Serviette Vs. Bev Davies Punk Rock Calendar. And if you could turn to page one, what do we have here?

Hilary: You marked the pages for me even. What a gentleman!

Nardwuar: Who do we open up to here? Proving that Hilary Duff is a punk, who do we see? What band do we see in the top right?

Hilary: The Go-Go's!

Nardwuar: That's The Go-Go's and, of course, the connection is...

Hilary: That me and my sister redid a Go-Go's song!

Nardwuar: Our lips Are...

Hilary: Sealed!

Nardwuar: Which was produced by...

Hilary: I wouldn't know.

Nardwuar: Wasn't the guy from Goldfinger helping out with that? John Feldmann, didn't he help out with that stuff?

Hilary: Oh you mean my version? I thought you meant their version.

Nardwuar: No, your version!

Hilary: Oh yeah, of course. John Feldmann helped out with that.

Nardwuar: And he was in a ska band called Goldfinger. But speaking of ska, we have The Specials. [Nardwuar shows Hilary a Specials record] Have you heard of The Specials?

Hilary: I have not.

Nardwuar: Believe it or not, Terry Hall from The Specials, co-wrote "Our Lips Are Sealed" that you, Hilary Duff, cover.

Hilary: You are a music genius. You know so much!

Nardwuar: Well thank you for helping spread the word, Hilary Duff, but it continues on. The punkness of Hilary Duff, check this out here. Turn to page two of the Punk Rock Calendar—you can drop that right there, just drop The Specials, Hilary Duff.

Hilary: Throwing The Specials on the ground.

Nardwuar: What have we come across here? Who do we have here? A picture of Duff McKagan by Bev Davies! This is when he was sixteen years old, playing drums for The Fastbacks, and then later joined Guns N' Roses and Velvet Revolver, and his name is Duff.

Hilary: Nice, look at that connection!

Nardwuar: So I was thinking about Double Duff, a band? Hilary Duff and Duff McKagan, together!



Photo by Bev Davies

Duff McKagan

What does Hilary Duff taste like?

Hilary: Where's Ryan at?

Nardwuar: Where's your security? Bring the security!

Hilary: I was busting him for wanting a king size instead of a regular size.

Nardwuar: Winding up here Hilary Duff, what's wrong with techno? You don't like techno music too much.

Hilary: No, you know what, that was actually a rumor that someone said I didn't like techno. I'm not a huge fan because I don't know much of it, so I can't say I don't like it.

Nardwuar: I was just wondering because Eminem hates techno and Eminem has mentioned you in a song, hasn't he?

Hilary: Look at you! You are just the king of connecting things aren't you?

Nardwuar: Hilary Duff, what did he say? "Hilary Duff is not quite old..."

Hilary: Umm, "enough?"

Nardwuar: Enough! Well, thank you so much Hilary Duff, really appreciate you speaking to me, Nardwuar The Human Serviette and schooling the kids on the punk rock connections of Hilary Duff. Lastly here, Hilary Duff, I want to ask you, will you ever take any fashion advice from Mr. Cojo [Steven Cojocar] at all again?

Hilary: Oh, um.

Nardwuar: You had an argument with him, didn't you? Who is Mr. Cojo, and would you ever fight with him? He's a Canadian, that's why I thought I would ask that.

Hilary: Oh, Cojo is a Canadian?

Nardwuar: Originally from Canada.

Hilary: Oh really? He's not living here anymore, huh? How do you guys feel about that?

Nardwuar: He's fighting with Hilary Duff.

Hilary: No, he's not. We're fine. I don't know if I'd take fashion advice from him, though.

Hilary Duff Security: Times up!

Nardwuar: Well, thanks so much Hilary Duff. Here we go, here's your last little present — the Punk Rock Calendar. That's free. You can keep the Punk Rock Calendar and put The Go-Go's on your wall, and you're going to be contacting Duff McKagan as well.

Hilary: I will. I promise.

Nardwuar: Maybe not the best goodie bag you've ever gotten. What's the best goodie bag you've ever got?

Hilary: You know what? I'd say this comes pretty close.

Nardwuar: Alright, well thanks so much Hilary Duff. Keep on rocking in the free world and doot doola doot doo...

Hilary: Doot doo!

Hilary: I'm sure he would be really excited about that.

Nardwuar: [Pointing to picture of Duff in the Punk Rock Calendar] But this was when he was sixteen. This is like how you were rocking when you were sixteen because you're all of nineteen now.

Hilary: Yes, I am.

Nardwuar: So this is him. This is your soulmate. Double Duff.

Hilary: Awesome!

Nardwuar: Hilary Duff, winding up here, I would like to ask you about this particular thing which I find very interesting. I found this little picture of you. [Nardwuar shows a picture] This is a picture of you in Winnipeg.

Hilary: Yes.

Nardwuar: Do you like convenience stores?

Hilary: Oh you know what? It's one of the biggest highlights of our road trip, yeah.

Nardwuar: This description of you... that's Hilary Duff isn't it?

Hilary: Yes.

Nardwuar: And right here, I love this little close-up and what it says is, "The Duffster was recently spotted in Winnipeg buying a variety of binging foods including a Reese's Peanut Butter Cup, Candy Bar, potato chips and other after-alcohol treats."

Hilary: Alcohol? I don't see any alcohol there.

Nardwuar: I thought that was pretty funny. They're trying to nail you for eating chocolate. Are you one of the few Hollywood stars who gets in trouble for eating chocolate?

Hilary: I don't get in trouble. I love chocolate, but that's actually peanut butter.

Nardwuar: But Reese's Peanut Butter? Isn't there chocolate mixed in there?

Hilary: Umm, I don't think so, the coating is just a candy coating, but there's peanut butter inside. I'm kind of a genius on these because I love them. It's peanut butter and that was actually for Ryan, who's my security guard.

Nardwuar: Where is he? Can we point him out here?

www.nardwuar.com

HUNCH -BACK

Interview by Joe Evans III

Pictures by Daryl Gussin

Design by Lauren Measure



Nerds are underrated. Think about it: when you're young, no one ever wants to hang out with the guy who spends all of their free time studying. But, down the line, once you're older, which doctor do you want to go to? Someone who just barely passed their tests, or the class

valedictorian? I say this, because as lesser bands spend their time and efforts trying to look cool and partying, Hunchback are "studying" the most obscure records they can find (and believe me, they'll find them), and playing some of the most original, powerful, unique, and beautiful noise rock you'll ever hear.

HUNCHBACK ARE

Mike—guitar, vocals

Jay—bass, vocals

Miranda—drums, vocals

Craig—keys, noise, vocals

Joe: How much do you love Neil Young?

Mike: [Holding out his arms] This much. A lot.

Jay: If we could double our arm spans, actually if everyone does it, it would probably be even more.

Craig: About *this* much [all joining arms and stretching them].

Joe: How big is your *Mad Magazine* collection?

Mike: It's fairly big. I don't have any really heavy stuff. I don't have any of the actual first printings of the comic book issues. The issues I have really only go back to the '60s.

Craig: You do have the middle finger cover?

Jay: That's my favorite one that you have.

every sound I make. It's pretty much the best fucking sound on the planet.

Joe: Do you work with sound for a living?

Craig: Yeah, I started doing live sound late this fall, at Asbury Lanes, which is a really awesome venue in New Jersey. And I'm doing this now. I record bands...

Mike: He's neglecting to tell you he works at Maxwell's now, but he's hooking up an ADAT (tape recorder) to record tonight's show.

Craig: Yeah, I have ADAT to record basement shows, which is the best thing ever.

Mike: We've recorded *a lot* of basement shows, which is silly for most people.

Craig: No, it's great.

Jay: It's good to have them archived, though. Eventually, we'll be able to put together a really good compilation of New Brunswick basement shows.

Mike: Or just bootlegs, if someone gets famous.

Jay: *Fame!*

Craig: Basically, this is just really banking on Ebay still being around [laughter].

Joe: What other bands have you collectively

do that. Jay and Miranda were playing in Planet Janet, and that was kind of how we thought of it. But Miranda and Craig went to high school together, and Jay and I went to high school together. And far before then—we were pretty young—we played in a lot of bands together: Bloodsucking Geeks, Sam's Town, Tu Lechon Asados, American Bandstand Communist Brigade...

Jay: Maybe the Lucky Strikes did a couple of shows...

Mike: Lots and lots of really silly bands.

Jay: Usually, we'd just play a few shows.

Mike: Bloodsucking Geeks was the first version of Hunchback in a way, because when we started it was me, Jay, and the drummer of Bloodsucking Geeks, and that wasn't really working out. Miranda was a great drummer who we knew, so we got together.

Jay: We played two shows as The Wizards Of Gore—one opening up for The Mermen and the other opening up for Dick Dale—and then we stopped being as much as a surf band and got Craig.

“There’s no good shows anymore.”
It’s because you suck, dude, that’s why.



Joe: Are there any other comics that you're really into?

Mike: Yeah, a lot. All the EC stuff, who are the guys who ultimately did *Mad*, and I love '60s underground comics, Rory Hayes, Justin Green. I love the '90s alternative stuff. I love Peter Bagge, and Mike Diana, the new guys like Johnny Ryan. It's great.

Joe: Craig, how do you work with sound?

Craig: I just make noises, usually. I nerd out with my synthesizers for hours and hours, making noises that no one wants to hear, really. And then out of it, sometimes you get things that sound cool. I like feedback a lot. Feedback is the inspiration for almost

been in together?

Mike: [Deep breath]

Jay: Lots...

Miranda: Wow...

Craig: This is my first band.

Mike: This is Craig's first band ever, that's true.

Jay: He did not play music. We were actually, like, "Craig, you've gotta help us trigger live samples." We were even thinking of doing simple noise, like some loops, but eventually that just evolved into him playing keyboards.

Miranda: And harmonica. And French horn.

Jay: And ukulele [laughs].

Mike: At the time, we wanted Craig to

Mike: That's when Hunchback proper really started.

Joe: Why did you start wearing dresses?

Miranda: Well, I'm a girl [laughter]. So I was born, and then they put me in one.

Jay: And they knew she was going to be in Hunchback.

Mike: So you were being born, and the doctor was holding a dress right there, ready.

Miranda: "We wanna train you early!"

Jay: With your short little baby arms going into it.

Miranda: My fat little baby head, too.

Mike: I always thought it was really cool when bands wore dresses, and that it looks really cool.

Jay: I did it a few times with a band I was in California.

Mike: In Gargantuan Thrill Machine? I'm sure the *Razorcake* readers are familiar with Gargantuan Thrill Machine.

Jay: It was a ridiculous ska punk band I was in when I was fourteen or fifteen. They were just on a couple of compilations.

Mike: No, they did all right.

Miranda: But that's the '90s, right?

Jay: Yeah, it was the '90s.

Miranda: So that's why.

Jay: So yeah, it was the '90s, and everyone was wearing dresses.

Miranda: And we're still in the '90s, all of us.

Jay: And we're very into, kind of the year punk broke bands, like that whole Sub Pop scene from the '90s, and that's a lot of the

Miranda: That's the only thing I say in the whole interview.

Joe: How far did you drive to pick up the copies of your first record?

Mike: How did you hear about that? That's pretty good.

Miranda: This is like *Inside the Actor's Studio*.

Jay: If you take out a map and you look how far New Jersey and New Hampshire are away from each other....

Mike: The thing was that we had this release show on Valentine's Day with The Ergs! It was going to be really fun, and it was totally booked. The day before, I was freaking out on the phone with the CD company, saying, "Where are they? The release show is tomorrow. What's going on?" and they screwed up. They were like, "We're sorry, but they're still here. We can have them to

Miranda: Yeah right—I get paid like, *a lot*. One of them is about getting your period on the road. It was sort of silly, not meant to be serious.

Mike: But there was truth to it. It's certainly something to think about it, like it happens.

Craig: Oh, I think it's the paying for basement shows one.

Mike: I think it involves "F you."

Jay: The "F word"? Oh we can't do *that*.

Mike: You were angry in it, like "Don't f-in come."

Miranda: I don't know what we're talking about.

Mike: There was the article where you were like, "If you really don't want to pay for a basement show, then don't come."

Jay: How it's not an entitlement, like these



Kids in the Hall is riot grrrl.

inspiration behind the dresses, I feel. Not only those scenes.

Mike: I genuinely feel really cool in a dress. I think it's neat.

Miranda: Everyone always wants me to wear a suit too, like, "Oh, you should be wearing a suit."

Mike: But it's not really like "Hey look, we're guys wearing dresses," so that's funny.

Miranda: It's more that we all like dresses.

Jay: It's like, "How about we get to wear something really comfortable, and you have to wear something really horrible and binding?"

Mike: Although comedy doesn't hurt on that front too, like *Kids in the Hall*. We all love *Kids in the Hall*.

Miranda: All male sketch comedy includes cross dressing.

Jay: Now that I think about it, *Kids in the Hall* is probably the number one reason I think dresses are cool.

Craig: It's riot grrrl.

Miranda: *Kids in the Hall* is riot grrrl. It's really what we came up with today.

Jay: I feel we should blow that one up.

you in two days," and it was absolutely no option. I think this is a metaphor for how we are with certain things, but there wasn't a question about it. I called Jay and said, "Can you take the train to my house? We've got to go to New Hampshire." So we drove up to New Hampshire, got there a little early, slept in front of the place for a few hours, the place opened, we got the CDs.

Jay: It was a few hours before they were ready, so we went to a comic book shop where we got some *Mad Magazines*.

Mike: We went back, got the CDs, ate at Hooters, took pictures of the CDs at Hooters, and drove directly to the release show. And we sold three of them that night!

Jay: It makes it all worth it.

Miranda: I'm going to go cry [laughter].

Joe: What's the New Brunswick/Screaming Females zine story?

Miranda: Are you talking about the period one?

Joe: I think so.

Mike: Miranda wrote a couple of pieces for *Hub City*.

Jay: She's on the staff.

bands come from far away. They spend their own money.

Miranda: There was an instance where certain people were not only refusing to pay, but being really belligerent about it, and I was, "How can you not understand people are on tour and they need to get paid in order to get to the next city, and it's not like you're entitled to be down here." That's the essence of what I said.

Jay: And a lot of it is the attitude, too, because a lot of time people really don't have the money, and say they'll pay double next time.

Craig: But they bring a fuckin' six pack and say they don't have the cash.

Mike: You get college kids that show up with a 40, and are like, "Oh, I don't have any money. I'm real sorry," and it's a bunch of crap.

Jay: And they give you attitude about it.

Miranda: It's really more the attitude, because, honestly, I think we've all been broke.

Jay: Yeah, it is the attitude. It's not very supportive. And if people keep acting like that, then no bands will come here. And

then you'll have nothing to go to with your 40 [laughing].

Mike: The thing that bothers us a little bit is that we've certainly been playing independent, basement, and house shows for a really long time, and it's gotten so much, *totally* more awesome in the past ten years. It's become amazing, frankly. And it could be better. It could be like a real thing that people can do, and have a real tour, and only play houses and basements, and it's gotten so much closer to it. But, people, because they're selfish, would rather not pay the three dollars, and have it die. And it's very upsetting.

Miranda: And then whine about it, even worse, they whine. "There's no good shows anymore." It's because you suck, dude, that's why.

Miranda: There's a lot of audience participation in that one, people screaming along about spiders.

Joe: Define the following words and terms. The first one is "Craiging."

[Laughter and yelling]

Jay: The Ergs! had to give you this. You definitely talked to The Ergs!

Mike: I wish, I *wish* that we could say, "Craig, you're definitely not comfortable with this."

Craig: Craiging is when you mess up an easy part on the keyboard.

Mike: We, technically—I guess we can answer the question—because we changed the meaning of Craiging from what it used to be to now: messing up a part on the keyboard. We did. We changed it at practice.

Miranda: We can't say.

game was directly over the sleeping area, which wouldn't have been a problem, but it was that game Dance Dance Revolution.

Jay: And as you can see, it's quite a problem to be sleeping directly under Dance Dance Revolution all night. Then Craig started playing "Punch Punch Ceiling."

Craig: We woke up early because we leave early.

Jay: Because we have to.

Craig: We have to find coffee shops and comic and record stores.

Miranda: We don't need to get home or anything.

Craig: So I played "Punch Punch Ceiling" in the morning.

Joe: What is "The Original Ten"?

Jay: Wow, you know a lot...

Mike: Jay and I were part of a group of



Feedback.
It's pretty much the best fucking sound on the planet.

Jay: And it's not like the local bands are skimming off the top. Usually, they don't make a dime.

Mike: And Screaming Females, anyone at The Parlor—Hunchback, The Ergs!—there's never been a question of paying the local bands, or even a band that's driving from New York, when there's a band from Portland or Germany. There's just no question about it.

Miranda: We feel strongly about it.

Joe: Has there ever been a building named after Hunchback?

Mike: Is there?

Jay: Fish has The Parlor.

Mike: Oh that's right, The Parlor. They call it The Parlor; it was actually a really old song from a band of Jay and mine.

Jay: American Bandstand Communist Brigade.

Miranda: Wow, that's right. That's crazy.

Mike: It was recorded by them first. Good luck finding that tape. Most of them were destroyed... by people who bought it [laughing].

Miranda: Hiyo!

Mike: But people liked it when we played it there. Fish liked it. I guess that's why he named it The Parlor.

Jay: We're not going to go any further [laughter].

Joe: Okay, also "chubbing."

All: Oh.

Mike: Let's just do that.

[Everyone proceeds to come forward and lightly pinch Joe's arm.]

Miranda: Oh you've got nice chubb.

Jay: Athletic chubb.

Miranda: [Deep voice] Is this bothering you?

Jay: That's chubbing.

Mike: It's an affectionate thing to do with your friends, to pinch their arms.

Jay: People are adverse to it at first, but if you will let yourself go to it, it's actually very calming.

Joe: What is "Punch Punch Ceiling"?

Mike: That's a *hilarious* story. We played a show far away, and afterwards, some of us wanted to go to sleep. Some of us wanted to play a dumb video game. So the people who wanted to go to sleep went into the basement...

Jay: That was all of us.

Mike: And then there were other folks who wanted to play this video game. The video

ten guys who went to high school together, who were great close friends, and certifiably crazy, I think, and we called that group The Original Ten.

Jay: To an extent, it still exists. We get together pretty rarely, sometimes for birthday parties, sometimes for weddings. A couple of us have tattoos.

Joe: Who has spent the most money on records while on tour?

Mike: Me, I absolutely prepared and treated tour as a buying trip. I bought a lot of stuff to sell, but I also bought a ton of stuff for myself. I found a bunch of really great, very hard-to-find stuff for great prices. I say this all the time; the good records are really outside of New York. New York stinks for record buying.

Jay: Every morning, he would be the first one up and usually be back from the record stores before we'd have eaten breakfast.

Mike: I'm really quite obsessive with it, yeah.

Joe: How does "real beauty" fit in with the theme of your songs?

Mike: We, a long time ago, sat down and started to talk about things that we believed

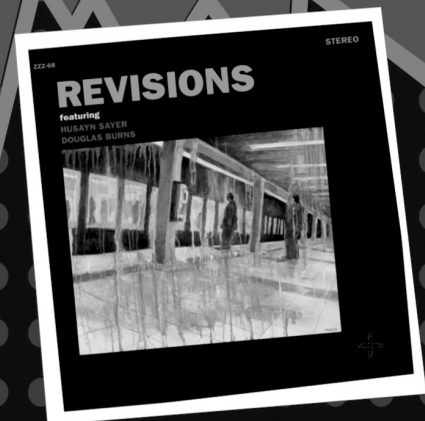
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Craig: It might be on the tape. Or I think it might have been on Myspace.

Mike: We'll tape it for you.



WOUNDED LION



Interview by
Ryan Leach



Photos
by Mor
Fleisher



Layout by
Daryl Gussin

Wounded Lion is a group of approximately six unassuming men and women. No bravado, no clichés—no *Decline of Western Civilization II* kitsch in their future. Wounded Lion is that rare breed of erudition that so seldom collides with rock'n'roll, embraces it, and churns out something like LiLiput's Rough Trade singles or (dare I say) The Young Marble Giants' sole LP. And that's not to say Wounded Lion sounds like any of their antecedents, cause they don't. The group simply comes from that always interesting lineage of creating your own style, your own realities—what Guy Debord would call “your own situations.” And what Wounded Lion chooses to do with this cognizance is what initially drew me to them and keeps me interested in what they elect to do in the future. Someone to watch, someone to listen to...

Ami (drums, vocals), **Brad** (rhythm guitar, vocals), **Chris** (bass, percussion), **Jun** (bass, percussion), **Raffi** (percussion, dancer), and **Shant** (percussion)

Ryan: I came across you guys maybe six months ago. When did Wounded Lion start?

Brad: It started with me asking Raffi and Ami if they wanted to be in a band about a year and a half ago. Raffi played trombone and Ami played drums, but they were both essentially non-musical, so I started teaching each of them how to play their instruments. Shant was in Spain, came back, and then he came on board. After that, we started playing a few shows. Next my old friend, Jun, and our other percussionist, Chris, also came on board 'cause it seemed fun. That's the very short version.

Ryan: You were in a band called Two Percent; how long were you doing that for?

Brad: Six or seven years. And in those six or seven years we had fewer gigs than Wounded Lion has had in a year [laughs]. It was a very infrequent thing. We never met people like Gabe (Hart, of Jail Weddings) or Edgar from the Guilty Hearts or Monty from The Lamps. We just never connected with the right people, so we were never playing on the right bills. We were just bugging people. We were this simple, scrappy, not exactly punk rock'n'roll group; and people were just confused about it. But it was like a zone for me to write songs. Chris, the other percussionist, was the drummer of that band for a while. But it just got boring and I scrapped it. A lot of Wounded Lion songs are actually Two Percent songs, but that doesn't matter. It's totally esoteric background.

Ryan: You don't know, man. Some demos might pop up or something.

Brad: Yeah, but it's so funny because I plugged away with that band for years and then from the very first Wounded Lion gig at Mr. T's in October of 2005, from that first gig, people were psyched! People were saying, “Ah, it's like the 13th Floor Elevators, man!”—all these things I love very much. And in those seven years of Two Percent, people were saying, “Oh, it's like Nirvana, right?” We were just in the wrong place.

Ryan: The wrong place at the wrong time!

Brad: Yeah! But now they're getting us in a slightly better context and it's sort of grown

from there. The band also has a really good chemistry of seasoned musicians and new musicians. There's that energy of immature '60s punk which is really important to me. There's also an art background to it.

Ryan: Yeah, you were an art teacher for a lot of years.

Brad: Yeah, that's how I met Ami and Raffi; through fine art stuff.

Ryan: Did you both teach?

Brad: No, more like active arts, exhibiting art.

Raffi: We studied art together in undergrad.

Brad: But Shant was the literature and film guy.

Raffi: So we let him in.

Ryan: Was the line-up that you had in Two Percent similar with the two percussionists? How did that evolve?

Brad: The multiple percussionists: it was not a plan. It just happened. I don't recall us ever saying “Dude, we need multiple percussionists.” It's almost like half the band was an accident or something.

Raffi: Yeah. When it started, Ami and I were new to music. She wasn't really using the floor tom, so I would play the floor tom on certain songs just to add a fuller sound. Then when Chris and Jun came on, it was like, “Well I'm already playing this,” and Chris said, “Well, I'll bring in a skillet and a jug of water and I'll play this.”

Ryan: I like the skillet. It's pretty good. Can you tell me a little bit more about how your artistic background influences what you do? Brad and I kind of talked about Dada and the deconstruction of very simple things.

Brad: My simple answer is the band is almost like a vacation for me. For folks like us who have studied art, it's pretty coagulated. No one ever asks what the band means; they just like it or they don't like it. It's music, so it's more of your heart than your body. It's not as mental as art.

Ryan: That was kind of what Lou Reed was talking about. He liked how the Velvet Underground combined the seriousness of great literature and art with music—which was fun. That point digresses back a little bit to what you were talking about, how you met up with Edgar and Monty and things

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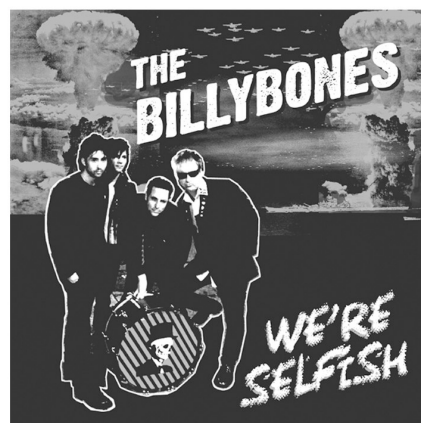
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like that; it kind of goes to show you how important community is to music. Five years ago there was a really good scene, but it seems to have dissipated.

Brad: Well, I know Edgar has tons of faith in the scene and in Los Angeles. He's almost like a visionary.

Ryan: I see you guys playing a lot at The Smell, too.

Brad: We've actually only played there once.

Ryan: Really? I've always pictured you at The Smell.

Brad: Mr. T's Bowl is more of our home base, actually, if there is one.

Ryan: I like your version of "Career Opportunities" (originally performed by The Clash) because you do the Micky Gallagher version—the one off of *Sandinista!* Who sings on that?

Brad: Ami.

Ryan: Oh, you do?

Ami: Yeah.

Ryan: [Laughs] That's cute. I thought it was a bunch of little kids that came around. I couldn't understand how you got them into the venues.

[Everybody laughs]

Brad: That's why we love Ami's voice.

Ryan: I really enjoy it. Are you guys recording? Do you have anything coming out soon? I know all your fans want something.

Brad: Well, we need to schedule some recording for this tiny record label out of Minnesota. We're going to do a split single with The Lamps.

Ryan: Oh, cool!

Brad: That guy Scott from SS told Monty that he loved it. I don't know if it's true or not, but Monty told us that he loved it.

Ryan: It's like those movies set in prisons where they talk down the line.

Brad: But we're hoping that there are supporting vibes in the scene and in the future. We'll see, but right now we just have crummy homemade demos on Myspace and a live recording.

Raffi: They get the job done, but we can do better.

Brad: I like the idea of having recordings that are warm and full.

Ryan: Yeah, I know what you're saying. Like analog recording.

Brad: Or just anything that's warm and full. Some of the songs lend themselves to that with background vocals and things like that.

Ryan: Yeah, you guys have kind of a Beach Boys sound on some of the songs. Like that song "Carol Cloud," it seems like there's a strong melody there and a Southern California harmony.

Brad: I'm not arguing, but I wouldn't say The Beach Boys.

Ryan: No, no. Just hints of it. I mean, it's kind of hard to duplicate The Beach Boys. You'd have to have a lot of brothers that love to do that stuff.

Brad: Yeah, right.

Ryan: Who is Carol Cloud by the way?

Brad: [Laughs] Well, we've been contacted by a Carol Cloud on Myspace.

Ryan: Does she want her name back? Does she want royalties?



It's almost like
half the band was
an accident or something.

Brad: No, she was just excited. She's an Avon lady in Arkansas.

Ryan: That's your first chance for royalties right there, man. She could put out your single!

Brad: The actual story about Carol Cloud is kind of long and not very interesting. It's more interesting to say that there's a Carol Cloud that exists who tracked us down. The song used to be what played when you went to her Myspace page. Going back to your art question. It's actually influenced the band a lot in that there's a way in art that you're trying to avoid clichés. And so maybe we have a heartier background in not writing typical songs, lyrically. It's not a conscious artistic choice, but you can't help but be warned by it.

Ryan: It's a perfunctory thing. Yeah, there

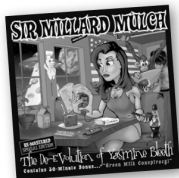
doesn't seem to be very much of a style or nexus between your songs. Like you were saying earlier—it sounds like Hasil Adkins, it sounds like something else. We were talking about your influences and they're very diverse. That's something I've noticed just from going to your shows. You don't have a categorized sound.

Brad: Right. That could be an art-influenced thing or that could be a Velvet Underground thing. I dig how the Velvet Underground can be known for dark lyrics about drugs, and then there are songs like "Sunday Morning" that are very, very sweet. Yeah, we'll play a slow song, we'll play a ballad. And maybe that eclecticism has an art foundation, too.

Ryan: That's what automatically sticks out. That's why I thought you guys were much more interesting than a lot of people,

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We got told once that we didn't seem like we were too much of an art band, which I thought was the best compliment.

because it seemed like you weren't trying to be codified. You weren't wearing the garbage you were supposed to wear or playing the songs you were supposed to be playing. And you play skillets. I've seen the electric jug being played before, but never the skillet.

Raffi: We got told once that we didn't seem like we were too much of an art band, which I thought was the best compliment because there's a lot of artists who are in bands who make shitty music and just say it's avant-garde. Like, "You wouldn't get it." For us, it's more about having fun and not really trying to make it. I've come across a lot of people in bands who are all trying to make it and go to things like South by Southwest and all this shit. There's a different element with

us. We're just friends and we like to play music and have a good time. It's a release from the retarded art world sometimes. You could also say, though, that we're each trying to make it, just in a totally different field outside of rock'n'roll. Like Shant takes film seriously; it's not like we're all slackers or too cool to care. We totally care, but it's like, "Yeah, we have a band."

Ryan: That was one thing that came across—you guys didn't seem like you were trying to make it to South by Southwest. I liked that because you get so nihilistic about some things because everybody's just trying to climb up the dung heap, yet they don't realize that there's no glory in climbing a hill of shit.

Brad: But on the other hands if, let's say, The Lamps said, "We're going to South by

Southwest. You want to come?" Sure, it's a free trip to Texas! Why not?

Ryan: That's why I got out of serious music journalism. You're just delusional if you think you're going to make anything out of it, especially in music which is such a bankrupt industry.

Brad: What I think is, and I don't know if this is related to art directly—but certainly some of my experience has been that when we're DJing or playing an art opening or something like that—one of the very important goals is for us to have fun and, therefore, for other people to have fun. That's a very ubiquitous, old fashioned, non avant-garde idea, but it's one that's really important for us.



GEYKIDO COMET

INTERVIEW BY JOE EVANS III
PHOTOS AND ARTWORK
COURTESY OF GEYKIDO COMET
PHOTOS ALSO BY SHANTY CHERYL
LAYOUT BY DAVE DISORDER

I like to think I've grown as a person a little over the years. I try to avoid exclusively eating deep fried food for every meal. I try to be a little more responsible and keep my shit together. And I feel like I can appreciate more in life than bands playing songs with lots of distortion and curse words.

This is why Geykido Comet Records appeals to me. Starting in 1998 with one 7", the husband and wife duo Shahab and Heela have gone on to put out a whole bunch more records, produce a book, and activate a digital store. Geykido Comet isn't just some dude trying to get out of working a nine to five. In fact, it isn't just "some dude" at all, but instead some honest, down-to-earth people who take time from their busy everyday lives to give back to their community, instead of coming home from work to watch TV every night.

Joe: Why is your label so angry?

Shahab: There is a lot to be angry with in the world today. Always has been, too. No doubt about it. Rape, religious persecution, war, murder... these have been with the human race for at least as long as the history books have been written. But, in general, Heela and I are pretty chill people. Injustices, hypocrisy and strife really chap our hides, as the old saying goes. And while we don't release records with black and white photos of dead carcasses or war zones, the label's name reflects the frustration and anger we feel at times.


Joe: How'd you come up with the label name?

Shahab: I wanted something that no one else would ever be able to accidentally come up with and use for their own. So I took the phrase for "ultimate anger" in Japanese and the translation of my name into English, and there you have it. When I was in eleventh grade, I had asked a Japanese foreign exchange student to translate my name into Japanese in case I ever wanted to get a tattoo. I was not about to get "peace" or "tranquility." He explained that my name couldn't quite translate into Japanese, so he would write something for me that could be a representative of my personality. What he ended up writing was "geykido."

When he told me it meant "angry," I looked at him like he was crazy. When I asked him what in the world could have made him think that of me, he replied by saying "The wall!" Then it immediately fell into place. Just a few weeks before, he handed me the Japanese characters for "geykido." We were in history class and had to individually act out a five-minute presentation and pretend we were pissed-off American colonists complaining about the tyranny and taxation of Mother England. I needed a good grade on this presentation or I wouldn't pass the class. Since everyone else's presentation was boring as hell, I was determined to make a memorable one. I went up to the chalkboard



Bart Van De Vel



and drew a real crude king of England and began my bitch-fest. I ended my presentation with, "And if the king were here right now, I'd..." and I grabbed my collar and ran and flung myself into the classroom wall. As I got up, truly dazed, I remembered that I had drawn a king on the board, so I ran up to it and started to punch the imaginary man. I got an "A," a standing ovation, and, eventually, the first word in the name for the record company I would put together three or four years later. Ever since then, people have either thought the label was dedicated to gay kiddos, or have wondered why Heela and I have a fascination with anger. [Laughs]

Joe: In addition to being married, you're also parents. How do you feel about this in the sense that many kids get into punk in opposition to their parents?

Heela: Most of the kids who get into punk simply to revolt against their parents don't end up sticking with it after a while. It's more of a phase for them. The ones who get into it because they like the music, its political messages, or want to set themselves apart from the jockos and preppie kids at school end up thinking or doing things that may cause some friction with their parents, even if that wasn't their intention. I didn't get into punk in order to rebel against my parents. They weren't too thrilled when my black hair turned fire engine red. Kids are going to rebel in some way or another. That's just part of being a teenager.

Shahab: I never really got into punk rock to rebel against my parents either, while the teenage me didn't quite appreciate my parents the way I do now. When I was in the seventh grade, right around the time my brother started borrowing Subhumans and Dead Kennedy tapes from his friends at school, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait and George Bush Sr. swooped in with his Desert Storm. I probably didn't have it as bad as the Middle Eastern kids in junior high after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, but what I went through was pretty bad. Kids began calling me Saddam, began beating the shit out of me while seig heiling, and kept telling me that the Aryan race would wipe out mine. What they didn't realize is that I'm Iranian and that my people had more reason to hate Saddam than America did for the eight-year war he had raged with Iran. The other thing they didn't realize is that Iranians are not Arabs, and, in fact, descended from Aryans. I

was the real Aryan, and here they are beating me up for not being one. Go figure. Anyway, at the time all I really knew was that I was the outsider who listened to punk rock and not mainstream hip hop or alternative rock and that these kids were beating me up for being different. Couple that with the newfound bands my brother was discovering for the two of us left and right, and that was my pathway into a new counterculture.

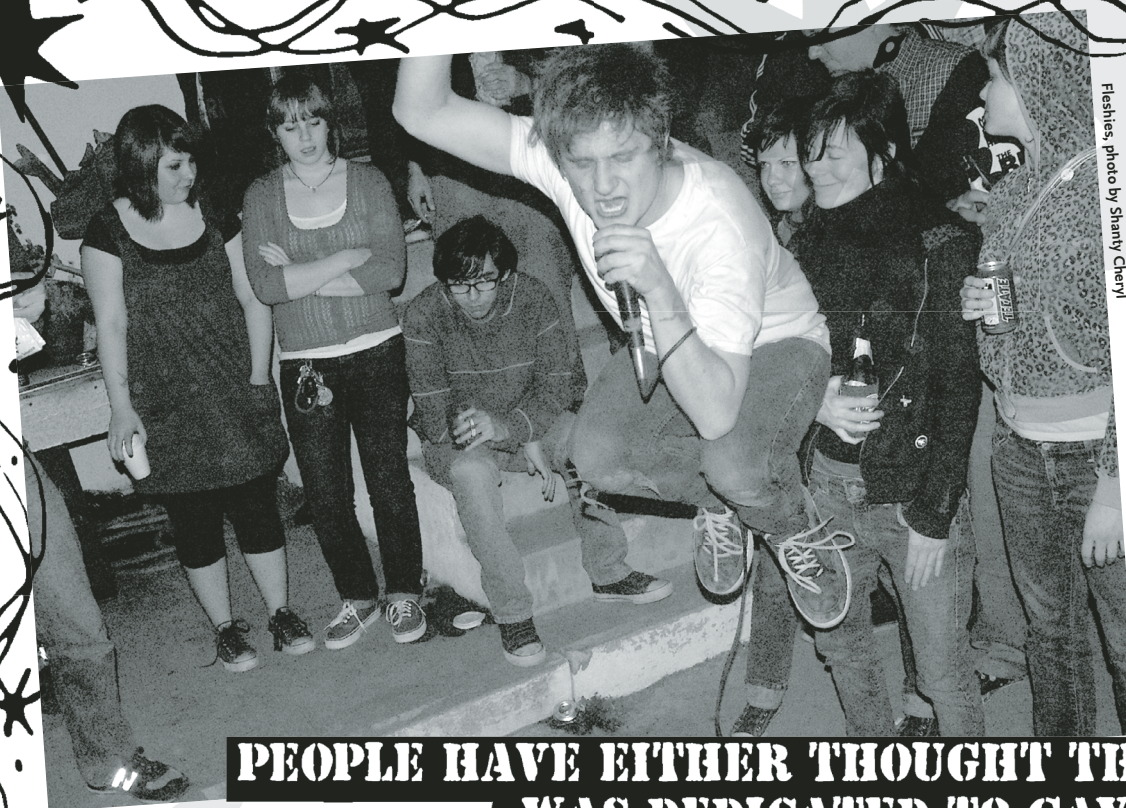
Joe: Many people into punk rock don't want to have kids...

Shahab: There are loads and loads of people into other types of music and in other scenes and other walks of life who don't ever want to have kids, and, in the same vein, there are lots of punk parents out there. There's nothing wrong with wanting to have babies! There's especially nothing wrong with it if you've got your act together and make sure you can handle and take care of your kids.

Heela: I can't say I'm looking forward to that day. I already get nervous thinking about our oldest daughter going to kindergarten, and that isn't for another two years. I'll try to be as understanding as I can while our kids are trying to figure out who they are. As for anyone into punk—or any scene for that matter—who doesn't want to have kids: don't. It's really tough to raise a family, and the last thing anyone needs are children with parents who can't take care of and support them. Yes, the world is super overpopulated, but don't be a hater if you never want to have children and you have friends who do. The next generation of cool, open-minded kids has to come from somewhere, right? [Laughs]

We have very few close friends—into punk or not—who are married, let alone who have children, so it's always nice to feel some support from your peers. On that note, I've noticed a lot of stuff lately from and about punk parents. Jim Lindberg from Pennywise wrote a book called *Punk Rock Dad*. The No Idea Records ads always have pictures of their kids in the background. One of the guys in the Aquabats started a pretty quirky new children's show on Nickelodeon called *Yo Gabba Gabba*. We've got some friends here and there, some in bands and at other labels and such, who have little ones, so it's pretty cool knowing we're not the only ones whose days are filled with crying babies, wiping butts, playing make-believe, gushing over your kid's silly smiles or finger-painting masterpieces, in addition to checking out the new *Off With Their Heads* or *Against Me!* albums or working on a new release. Our existing support system consists of grandparents watching the kids for a few hours when they have time, but since I'm still nursing our baby, it's hard to be apart for too long. Even though the grandparents are a





**PEOPLE HAVE EITHER THOUGHT THE LABEL
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really big help and we appreciate it, it isn't quite the same as having peers and friends who can relate and just hang out without trying to find some excuse to leave because they might not realize how incredibly awesome your kids are. [Laughs]

Joe: With Geykido Comet's records, I've noticed you go against more corporate policies, like "signing" bands, but you also make a conscious effort into putting professionalism into your releases.

Heela: Professional, yes, but not necessarily corporate. We've certainly come a long way from our first few releases. Shahab pretty much worked on the IntroSpect 7" and *We're Not Generation X* compilation CD by himself. I wouldn't say they were unprofessional, but he probably spent way more time and money than he needed to. That was before we knew of better and less expensive places to get the releases made or had friends who could help out with the artwork and layout so that the end product would be nice and pretty. We also did a lot more literal cutting and pasting before, as opposed to using the computer. Regardless, there are certain protocols you pretty much need to adhere to, like making one-sheets and sending out press packs. Most distros and magazines that review music prefer to have specific info on a release, and I think a band is taken more seriously when this info is coming from a label—again as far as the distros and mags are concerned—rather than from the band itself who, obviously, thinks they are the best thing ever.

Shahab: We found a Fat Wreck Chords one-sheet Word document online somewhere once and have used it as a template ever since for those dumb-yet-necessary factoid thingamabobs. How's that for incorporating capitalistic professionalism? But, seriously, that little piece of paper does wonders. All we do is include a track listing, some info about the band, web addresses, and some key facts about the release. When we send it along with our albums for review in magazines, the reviewer isn't 100% clueless about our bands or releases. They have at least some bit of history or knowledge before listening and writing their review. It makes for better reviews all around. Even the reviews that rip our music to shreds are more bearable when the reviewer knows what they're talking shit on.

Heela: We definitely pay attention to the small details in order to put out a release we can be proud of and not something we rushed through that is full of mistakes, even if we're the only ones who would really notice them. I mean, who wants to read a bunch of misspellings, look at some crappy pixelated CD artwork, or hear bad mastering jobs? If you are going to be spending your money on releasing an album, you don't want to look like an idiot. On that same note, we don't take things too seriously. The label has always been more of a hobby, so we try not to get stressed out if things don't turn out exactly as planned. We've had a few cases where the comps weren't mastered perfectly; some songs are louder or quieter than others.

Layout tends to be an issue, too; problems with the template during the creation process or typos we overlooked. I always hate that because I'm such a perfectionist. And, when bands break up, we still have a bunch of their releases sitting in our garage. We can't get mad at them because things happen and people change.

Joe: Was there a specific record that made you want to start a label?

Shahab: I was basically trying to find a way to release things from bands I was in—Kill The Scientist, Listen, No Erasers Allowed, and most recently Passporte—or bands I played shows with like ESL, IntroSpect, and Shamus O'niel who weren't being given the time of day by other labels. The first release was for a friend's first 7" release, the now out-of-print IntroSpect EP. Soon after, it veered away from trying to release just the bands I was directly involved with when things started to pick up. We started to get semi-serious.

Joe: Was there a specific release that made you feel justified in what you're doing?

Shahab: The benefit CDs we've released were really high points. They were great projects to have been involved in. Yes, these releases were set up to send help to non-profits we admired, but the process of gathering the bands and sequencing the music made us feel really great. It gave a purpose to all the motions with more at stake than just the music.

Heela: Releasing the Buck 7" was pretty exciting, too. I had been a fan of Buck since

EVEN THE REVIEWS THAT RIP OUR MUSIC TO SHREDS ARE MORE BEARABLE WHEN THE REVIEWER KNOWS WHAT THEY'RE TALKING SHIT ON.



Toys That Kill, photo by Shanty Cheryl

they first started, because the lead singer, Lisa Marr, was also the lead singer of my absolute favorite band in high school, cub. They were actually one of the first bands I discovered on my own and really got in to. I even have pictures from when I was still in high school and I saw cub play at the local record store in Vegas where I grew up.

Joe: What's the longest-running difficulty your label has faced?

Shahab: I might not be speaking for every label or label owner, but running a label, no matter how big or small, is always a thankless job. The bands, for better or for worse, only want their share of the limelight before they break up and tend not to care about their previous releases. The outside companies who distribute your music to stores, the booking agents, the pressing plants who make the final CDs and records, are only looking out for their own pocket. The sentiment is the same when I talk to labels roughly the size of GC. At the end of the day, hardly anyone thanks the person behind the scenes. You've got to be doing it for the love of your output or it's all for nothing.

The other day I was emailing back and forth with a really great guy, Todd Congelliere (Recess Records), and we were shit talking on the dumbass who ran Liberation Records. Somewhere in the conversation I said that one of the main things that pissed me off about the guy, aside from his douchebag

personality and his dumb luck, was the fact that his label, which was started the same year as GC, had major distribution deals, whereas we've always had an uphill battle with getting distribution or even fighting to get paid once we got into a distribution deal. You see, without a distributor, all an indie label is, is a stockpile of records in a garage or spare closet. In order for the CDs to reach more than just the casual person who happens to want to spend money on your website, you need a distributor to pick up your catalog and deal it out to record stores and fans. Some distributors are just really popular mailorder catalogs and websites. The major ones will spread everything they carry from every label they service to Virgin Megastores—and stores of that nature—worldwide. Anyway, it seemed completely unfair that this guy be distributed worldwide while we were chasing mailorder distros for our money. Todd said something along the lines of, "Well, that guy always tried to go after the stuff that would sell tons of units. That's why he got those deals. You release things you love, and that almost never gets you distribution." And he's right. I understand capitalism, I really do, but I just don't understand having the passion to start a record label in order to just put out stuff that will sell. If investing is what you're into, there are a lot of other industries you might want to get started in.

Joe: You've gotten involved with some different political causes. Why did you choose to the ones you did?

Heela: Our first benefit CD helped raise funds for and awareness of RAWA, which is the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan. After 9/11, I felt that the other, often forgotten, victims of the Taliban, particularly women and children in Afghanistan, needed to be supported. My family is from Afghanistan, and I was born in Kabul, so the cause itself is near and dear to my heart. I had always wanted to help out those less fortunate, but with some charities, you never know where your money is really going. I felt assured that the money we raised for RAWA would actually reach the people who needed it.

We had become friends with the former president of the Afghan Women's Mission, which is the U.S.-based support and fundraising group for RAWA, headquartered in Southern California. RAWA is such an underground operation because the lives of its members and supporters have always been at stake, particularly during the misogynistic Taliban era. The founder herself was murdered in 1987. But we were able to see photos and hear accounts of our new friend's trips to Afghanistan and know all of the assistance they received was being used properly. We were able to donate about \$2,000 during a fundraising event to re-open the Malalai



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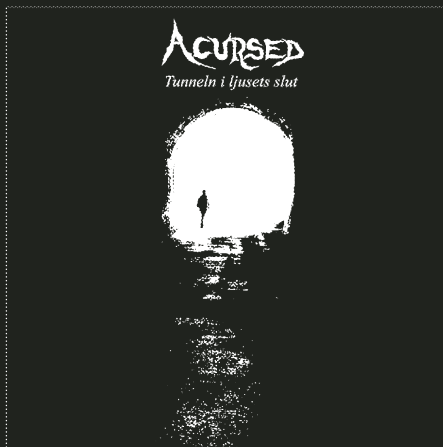
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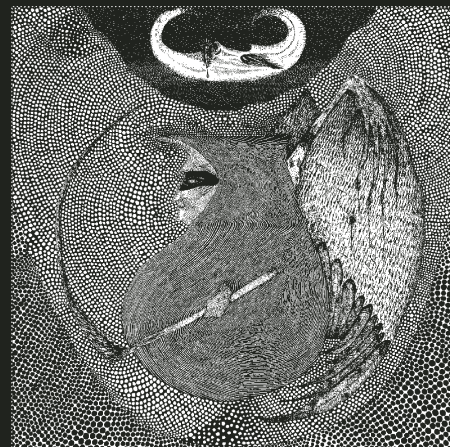
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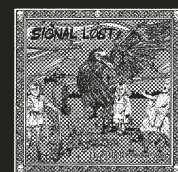
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Peelander Z

Hospital for Afghan refugees in Pakistan. This was a big deal, since Afghan refugees are often turned away from Pakistani hospitals because they are refugees. There are always medics who try to help out at refugee camps, but they rarely have access to medicine or hospital beds.

The next benefit CD was for IndyMedia.org. As the whole "war on terror" kept continuing and we kept getting fed all this bullshit from Fox News and such, we really liked how IndyMedia allowed regular people to use the Internet to report uncensored news from around the world, much in the same vein as Jello Biafra's famous quote: "Don't hate the media. Become the media." They were a little bit more difficult to get and stay in contact with. It's such a loose-knit community organization that resolves around listservs, so it was hard to pinpoint a specific person to stay in touch with. But that's what works for them and what allows so many voices to be heard.

Joe: What made you decide to release more than records?

Shahab: Each release, from our CDs, to our records, to our T-shirts and book, to our stickers and posters and websites and art, is taken on as an individual project. We have so many things going on at once creatively that releasing more than just records was bound to happen. We just do what we do, and if it fits the umbrella of GC, we slap the logo on it.

Heela: I don't think we initially intended to release more than music, but as we've grown, so have our interests and abilities. We may not have had the know-how or motivation to release other stuff, like the *Industry Standard* art book or our upcoming music zine DVD if we had never released records in the first place. It's funny; Shahab is typically the one who has a million ideas about what to do next with the label, and I have to be the one to slow things down so we can figure out how best to proceed, what needs to be scrapped,

WHO WANTS TO READ A BUNCH OF MISSPELLINGS, LOOK AT SOME CRAPPY PIXELATED CD ARTWORK, OR HEAR BAD MASTERING JOBS?



Kill The Scientist

what needs to be tweaked, who's going to do what. He's the accelerator of the GC-mobile and I'm the brakes. You need both in order to get to where you're going; not just regarding the label, but in life. We're very yin and yang in that respect. We're similar in a lot of ways and completely different in others. He's definitely an extrovert and I'm more of an introvert. But we manage to balance each other out, sometimes even finish the other's thoughts. Doing projects other than records gives us a chance to get to know and work with more cool people than we might otherwise not get to, and also lets us expand on our own abilities.

Joe: How do you feel about the trend of legal downloads, or digital-only releases?

Shahab: Well, we just spent a grip of money

to license a legit mp3 store and I spent four months to rebuild it the way I want it to look and feel, so I hope there's an upward trend in it! [Laughs] As far as digital-only releases, if the band has no funds and no label willing to release a fantastic recording, then what a cheap and great way to get the music out to peoples' CD-Rs and mp3 players. It's probably just as good of a promotional tool as any streaming music on the web would be.

Joe: Is GCDdownloads meant to purely be an extension of your own label, or to branch out and carry tons of other releases, like a No Idea meets iTunes?

Shahab: [Laughs] Yeah, it's sort of like No Idea meets iTunes. Most of the albums we have on GCDdownloads are albums we've already released, but the most recent EP on there is from a band out of New Mexico called Shang-A-Lang, and it's exclusive in the sense that if you want these songs for your mp3 player or to burn on a CD for your car, this is the only spot you can get it at. If you want it on vinyl, you can go to Dirt Cult Records and pick it up. Sometime soon we're going to also be offering some of Todd from Toys

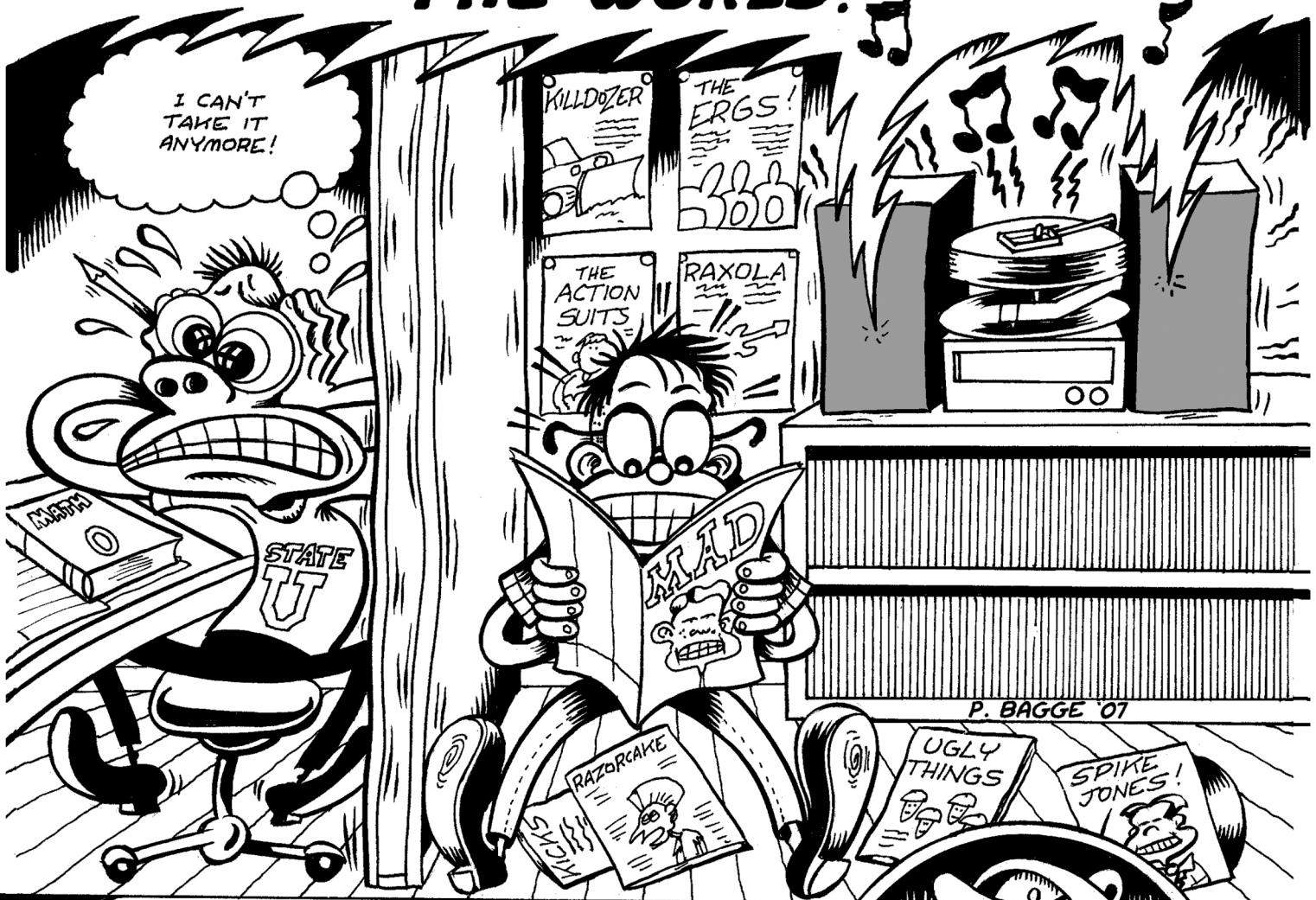
That Kill's solo stuff as a digital-only-for-now release too. So, yeah, I don't have any negative thoughts about digital-only releases.

At this point, some of our catalog is already on iTunes, Napster, eMusic, and Downloadpunk...so we're kind of seeing how that goes. But GCDdownloads as a website and a standalone mp3 store is a test run for us. This way, if a digital release is doing real good then maybe we can opt to release it on vinyl or CD as an official, tangible release. We also offer some of our vinyl releases as digital downloads on the site for those who no longer have—or have never owned—a record player but would still love to have a certain release in their collection or the type of person who usually buys vinyl and then rigs their record player to their computer to create

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crude mp3s of the release. This way, they get high quality mp3s of the vinyl release as it was intended to be heard without losing any quality. Personally, I'd buy the vinyl with its cover and aesthetic over mp3s any day, but people do love their mp3 players these days.

Joe: It seems like there isn't really a certain "GC Sound" in the sense of coming off as a hardcore label or a pop punk-specific label. Is this intentional?

Heela: Not really. Shahab and I both have pretty diverse musical tastes. Obviously, we enjoy punk of all varieties. Pop punk, like the Descendents, Randy, the Bananas, the Queers, the Methadones, to more political or hardcore stuff, like Subhumans, Grimple, Propagandhi, Melt Banana. We love hip hop: The Beastie Boys, Talib Kweli, Dead Prez, Looptroop, Wu Tang. Funky electro stuff like !!!, Ladytron, and Le Tigre. More mainstream artists, too: Bjork, Pet Shop Boys, Bob Marley, Ozomatli, Kinky. Old stuff, new stuff, underground stuff, radio-friendly stuff! [Laughs] Even stuff the other person doesn't like. Can't say I'm so hip to grindcore. And Shahab's not a big fan

of Green Day. I think our large range of likes and dislikes is reflected in the stuff we put out. While it mostly falls under the "punk" umbrella, the bands we've worked with vary quite a bit. I suppose it might be easier releasing music that sounds very similar, but we like to keep things eclectic. One of the main things I've noticed with the bands we work with is that they are all very much into the do-it-yourself mentality when it comes to booking shows, touring, and merch. GC is not a huge, self-sufficient label and the bands we have worked with aren't the type to just sit around and wait for someone to take care of everything for them. It's this DIY ethic that's the glue that holds GC together.

Shahab: We put out only things we are deeply passionate about or have worked on. Even though there isn't a specific GC sound, I think if one is familiar with our catalog and bands, when you hear a new release or a new band it'd be easy for you to say to yourself, "That definitely sounds like a GC band." The same can be said for other really fantastic indie labels such as No Idea and Recess. They put

out what they like from the friends they've made along the way and none of it really sounds like the record released before it.

Joe: No matter what, there's probably always going to be that, "Things just aren't as good now" attitude. But in discussion, I kind of thought that was a lot of crap, and that there were more and better bands and places to play than ever. How do you feel about this sentiment?

Shahab: I'm not so sure if the "there are tons of better places to play" part of that statement rings true in every part of the map. I feel that all the great venues I used to frequent, like Koo's Café in Santa Ana and Juvée Skate Shop in Hollywood—to name only a few—are all gone. And not too many harboring the same atmosphere have sprung up after the fact. I'm not sure why this is. It could be rent. It could be upkeep of a place that gets thrashed by its patrons. But, as far as backyard and basement shows are concerned, well, those will always rule and will hopefully never die down.

I agree that the "Things just aren't as good now" sentiment is complete crap. While I feel that some of the music being released nowadays can give the old school stuff a run for its money, I don't think that means there are better bands around, either. Our MySpace page gets about fifty "add me" requests a day, a lot of whom are bands trying to get signed. More often than not, the music *sucks*! If I let the friend requests slide for a couple days, I have this looming chore staring at me in the face. If at least every add request was accompanied by a sale from our catalog, I could then hire someone to wade through and keep up with all of that MySpace mail! [Laughs]

Heela: The "good ol' days" will always seem better than they were at the time, but I think there are just so many bands around these days that the scene—or whatever—is completely oversaturated. That doesn't mean there aren't any good bands around anymore. It just means that you have to treasure the cool new bands you do find. Shahab mentioned MySpace. Matt from Four Deadly Questions had initially gotten in contact with me via Friendster, so once we got their demo in the mail, I was pretty excited to hear it. Aside from demos, we do hear about a lot of bands on sites like punknews.org. In high school, I'd find out about bands from friends or going to shows, but mostly from listening to college radio shows in Vegas at night. I'd make mixtapes that I listened to over and over, but if I didn't catch the DJ's playlist, sometimes I wouldn't even know who some of the bands were 'til years later. I still have a tape somewhere with a bunch of really old F.Y.P. songs, and never would have guessed I'd end up doing their last interview or releasing a Toys That Kill record years later. Nowadays, you can Google a band and find out what each member's favorite ice cream flavor is, which is cool, but I think part of the fun back then was having to do some detective work to get the scoop about your new favorite band.

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RAZORCAKE 55



the TRANSMITTER

Photo By Femke Van Delft

Punk rock as a genre can be restrictive and might not always include bands such as the Tranzmitors, who wear suits and have nice hair cuts, or at least while they're onstage. Some punks might sneer at these neatly groomed lads and fail to give them the respect they deserve. You see, it's not easy to use three-part harmonies without sounding like wimps, but the Tranzmitors manage it effortlessly and with balls. The Tranzmitors, in fact, create such perfect blasts of power pop/punk genius that you'll be looking on the back of their debut album to see if Nick Lowe wrote the songs for them. Sure, the guitars are jangly rather than Über distorted and the vocals are sung rather than snarled, but don't be fooled: the self-titled album has enough bite to take your arm off at the shoulder. Not just that, but the Tranzmitors never get overly sappy and understand implicitly that sweetness must be countered with heavy hooks, a hard-hitting rhythm section, and guitars that sting. To put it simply, you haven't heard anything this irresistibly catchy since The Jam or The Undertones took Britain by storm. Perhaps some of you hardnuts might think that the Tranzmitors aren't "punk" enough for you, but to overlook a band this powerful would just be sad. Sure, pick up the new Career Suicide release, but do yourself a huge favor and get the Tranzmitors as well. Don't come whining to me later and say, "But Chris, you didn't tell us that the Tranzmitors were so great!" You've been told.



RS

interview by Chris Walter
photos by Bev Davies &
Femke van Delft
art junk by Amy Adoyzie

Jeffie: guitar/vocals
Nick: guitar/vocals
Mike: bass/vocals
Jarrod: keyboards
Bryce: drums

Chris: Where do you guys get your matching suits?

Jeffie: They're not matching.

Chris: Well, they look as if they match from the dance floor.

Jeffie: Once, as a joke, we talked about it. Someone in the band bought a polka dot shirt, so we thought it would be funny if we all wore polka dot shirts. But it never happened.

Chris: So you guys just like to dress sharp onstage?

Jeffie: We feel that it's our job to put on a show, and it just so happens that our fashion sense sits within the same realm. But there's certain continuity to what the band wears onstage.

Chris: You're not one of those bands who want to get up there in your street clothes.

Jeffie: I've done that before, and it works for some bands, but I like going to a show and getting that feeling like, "That's the band." When they're on the stage, there's something different about them, but as soon as they're off then they should be just like any other guy and acting as if there's no big difference. But when someone gets on the stage, I want them to *be* the band. I want them to treat me like dirt; I want to be entertained. There's something to be said for a band that when they're on the stage, they're almost like a gang.

Chris: KISS, for example. Or the Ramones.

Jeffie: The Ramones would be a better example, because KISS was from outer space. They were aliens, so that didn't count. But when you saw the Ramones, you were like, "Look at them!" Even the Ramones, who, arguably, tons of people tried to copy, had a look that was all their own. Even when Dee Dee rebelled and had shorter hair, they still looked like the Ramones. The reason those guys looked like that was because they were all into those '60s bubblegum groups.

Chris: Yes, we know that for a fact.

Jeffie: And those '60s bands all had that look, which is really no different than what the Tranzmitors are doing.

Chris: Fair enough. Now that we've beaten that to death, what is it about British punk invasion bands that you like so much? I hear a lot of the Boys, The Jam, The Undertones, and XTC in your music.

Jeffie: I love those bands so it's no coincidence that we sound like them. Of all the bands from that era, whether they're American bands or whatever, they always stuck out as being better than anything else. I really liked the late seventies mod revival bands and the power pop groups. Even the nasty, nasty punk bands, it was their catchier songs that appealed to me.

Chris: The more melodic ones.

Jeffie: Yeah, people would be like, "I love the Dead Boys," but the ones I liked by them were almost pop songs. It's not as if I can listen to those records in their entirety because I find a lot of it just terrible. But the big, fat pop hooks, that's what I'm into. And the English bands, I think, embrace the pop hook more than the Americans.

Chris: Would you call the Tranzmitors a revival band?

Jeffie: No. Because we were never this band before, so there's no revival to it.

Chris: I don't mean like a reunion band. I mean, are you trying to bring back a different era?

Jeffie: I wouldn't say that we were trying to bring anything back, but we're making an effort to play what I like to listen to. I like a lot of those bands, so in a sense it's like that, but...

Chris: Are you trying to add a new element to it?

Jeffie: Not really. We're just playing it the way we wanna play it. You listen to Tommy James and the Shondells, or the Four Seasons, and you get those big hooks that they have; it's almost like a production line. Those Motown hooks...

Chris: So you're saying that everything has been done before and your music just reflects the music you like?

Jeffie: Sure, I mean the '70s bands were taking stuff from the '60s bands, and the '80s bands were taking stuff from the '70s bands. I liked the new romantics. I was a big fan of the Cure.

Chris: The Cure? Really?

Jeffie: I love that band, and lots of the moody, new romantic stuff like the Stone Roses and Blur right into the '90s. And then you end up here. There's no way you can start a band and just eliminate everything that has come before you.

Chris: Even if you do an experimental noise band, you'll end up sounding like Nurse With Wound.

Jeffie: You're going to end up sounding like *someone*. You're just lying if you think that you sound completely original, because everything's been done. You just take the parts you like and do your own thing.

Chris: And then it's yours.

Jeffie: It's yours. With this band, you can say that a lot of the influences come from the late '70s or early '80s, but then again, some of it comes from the '50s and '60s and all the way through.

Chris: Has commercial success ever entered into the equation? I mean, The Boys never really made it big. Do you think the Tranzmitors will have a better chance of succeeding where others have failed?

Jeffie: We probably have less of a chance. After all, those English bands were all on major labels. There was a huge attempt to make those bands famous. The Boys were just unlucky. Of all the bands, really, they were better than most. I mean, they have four albums, and all four of them, arguably, are essential. But they had unluck: their record came out right when one of the labels was going out of business, they had management problems, you know, that sort of thing. Those bands had money behind them; they were on Top of the Pops and they recorded at Abbey Road Studios, which is why they sound as good as they do. Lots of those bands *were* huge, but only in England. The Jam only had maybe two hits in North America, and they were one of the biggest bands of all time. They're like the quintessential band. [Bass player Mike enters the coffee shop.] Good timing, Mikey. You showed up just before practice.

Chris: We've been talking about the suits and mod revival. You know, The Undertones, The Boys...

Jeffie: The Boys and The Undertones weren't mod revival. They predated it. The mod revival bands were more like The Lambrettas, The Secret Affair, and The Teen Beats, or The Purple Hearts, and that's just scratching the surface. This was in the early '80s: the two-tone scene and the mod revival scene kinda parallel each other. One got way bigger than the other.

Chris: You mean like Selecter, uh...


Jeffie: The Specials, Selecter, and all those bands. And Madness. Madness was one of the biggest... no, Madness was probably *the* biggest pop band of the '80s. They had more hits than anyone else.

Chris: More than The Jam.

Jeffie: More than The Jam. Madness was huge, as huge as you can get. Paul Weller, however, was able to make a career out of music and Madness only had Madness. Style Council was really popular as well (a post-Jam project). They had some international hits; they were on Band-Aid and all that. Paul's solo records through the '90s, and even the one he put out two years ago, all did well. His last record debuted at number one in England or something like that. Almost thirty years after the fact.

Chris: So how did you get into the mod thing, anyway?

Jeffie: The music part of it was always there, at least in regards to all the Mod revival bands of the late '70s. But I was a punk rock skateboarder for the better part of my life and it wasn't until I was in my mid-twenties that I really started thinking about the whole ascetic part of it. I grew up with lots of skinhead friends, so you always had Fred Perry and that kind of gear. I rode a Vespa when I was in college but I was too dirty to care about, or in all honesty, pull off any kind of fancy mod look. I was always skateboarding and messing about, but I do remember, and this is kinda dorky but whatever, watching The Jam's *Snap* video and thinking it would be so cool to look like those guys. Anyway, I wrecked one of my knees so I was forced into skateboard retirement, and it was around this time that I thought I would start putting together a new wardrobe for the day I turn thirty. When I turned thirty, I hung up my leather jacket and put on tailor-made suit.

A black and white photograph of a man with short hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He is looking upwards and to the right, with his mouth slightly open as if singing or speaking. He is holding a guitar, and his hands are visible on the fretboard. The background is out of focus, showing what appears to be a wall with some circular patterns. A large, jagged, comic book-style speech bubble is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text. The speech bubble has a thick black border and a jagged, lightning-bolt-like edge. The text inside is in a bold, sans-serif font. In the bottom right corner, there is a stylized, white line drawing of a hand with fingers spread, pointing towards the speech bubble.

THERE'S
NO WAY
YOU CAN START
A BAND
AND JUST
ELIMINATE
EVERYTHING
THAT HAS
COME
BEFORE
YOU.



Photo By Femke Van Delft

Chris: I'm not sure if this qualifies as a serious or silly question, but how old were you when you saw the movie *Quadrophenia*?

Jeffie: It must have been the '80s at some point. They used to show it on one of those First Choice channels.

Chris: But when you saw *Quadrophenia*, you didn't rush out and buy a scooter and a parka or anything.

Jeffie: Are you kidding me? I could care less about that.

Chris: But did you like the music?

Jeffie: Well, the first couple of Who records were alright. *Sell Out* is probably my favorite, and most people make fun of me for that. But I think that record is hilarious.

Quadrophenia was great, but it was just like watching *Suburbia* or the *Wanderers*, or any of those movies. They take a movie that is pinnacle to a pop culture and is really easy to get into, and you think, that sounds cool. But in reality...

Chris: It doesn't really represent what is going on.

Jeffie: Well, no, because *Quadrophenia* took place in England, way before I cared...

Chris: Way before you cared... [laughs].

Jeffie: Yeah, I could care less about that kind of stuff. At the time, I was listening to punk rock bands and skateboarding, and you know... maybe I thought they were cool, because I did start buying scooters when I was pretty young.

Chris: Vespa?

Jeffie: Yeah, I had one of those, just out of high school.

Chris: So *Quadrophenia* did affect you!

Jeffie: Well, uh... kinda... but we never...

Chris: You didn't take leapers...

Jeffie: No, I did do that...

Chris: See? *Quadrophenia*!

Jeffie: But I'm pretty sure that me thinking speed was a pretty cool drug had nothing to do with *Quadrophenia*. Maybe it did, but I don't even touch that stuff anymore. But if I was gonna, I'd be all over the speed. That was good times.

Chris: So, uh, you guys always seem to play with hardcore punk bands such as the Subhumans or DOA. Is there any reason for that? Do you feel that the Tranzmitors will appeal to punk fans?

Jeffie: I feel that that the Tranzmitors have punk tendencies and attitude, even though we're not a punk band, you know?

Mike: Yeah, sure, we're a punk band.

Jeffie: Well, okay, what the fuck... [laughter all around]

Chris: Do you ever get the mohawked punks standing there wondering what the fuck's going on when you play?

Jeffie: Nah, this is 2007, it's totally different. Maybe fifteen years ago, that would have happened; the little sub-groups were more contained. The only reason punks listened to The Jam was because they ended up on compilations, but they never listened to any of the groups that The Jam spawned—those were little secret bands. Now everybody can get everything, so you just Google something and there it is. You find out that it's all intertwined—that it's all the same thing.

Chris: So it's just a big melting pot and the Tranzmitors can play with Gogol Bordello or...

Mike: We just did a hardcore festival.

Jeffie: People mention The Boys all the time, but up until a couple of years ago, no one had even heard of them. They were a secret band for years and years. Nobody cared about that band, and they were awesome!

Chris: What's the song "Alma Blackwell" about? I dig these lyrics: "The commie on the top floor is drunk and seeing red. The kids from Unit Two never seem to go to bed."

Jeffie: It's about an apartment building I lived in. It was like a co-op building, and all the references are about my neighbors. My favorite line is about this fellow named Allan who lived down the hall from me, and we would sometimes go play soccer. He's an Arsenal fan and I'm a Chelsea supporter, so we'd give each other lots of grief. The nickname for the Arsenal club is the Gunners, and Allan was always saying "The Gunners are gonna take the cup."

Chris: So, what was the line?

Jeffie: "The Gunners are gonna take the cup." Anyway, that's where that comes from.

Mike: When I went to the U.K., my family was saying, "So why are you guys into the Gunners? I thought you were a Chelsea fan, right?" I was surprised that they picked that up.

Jeffie: I get on well with Mike's family.

Mike: I think they like you more than me.

Jeffie: We'd go back and forth at each other, especially talking about ball teams and stuff.

Chris: Where's this?

Mike: Mainly Essex, and in London, too.

Chris: So do just your friends over there have your record, or do you have distribution?

Jeffie: The album came out on Stiff over there.

Chris: D'oh! I knew that! I forgot. So, what's the response been like?

Jeffie: Really good. I mean, we went there sort of before the record came out...

Mike: Yeah, there was a bit of a buzz happening. It'll be interesting to see, going back, if the record is available now.

Chris: But Stiff should distribute it, no?

Jeffie: Yeah. You could already buy it over there on Deranged, but only as an import. Gord from Deranged Records has done an amazing job for us.

Chris: What about Keith from Scratch Records. Does it help that you work there?

Jeffie: No. [laughter all around.]

Chris: No nepotism involved there. So, last question: did you and Nardwuar the Human Serviette get beaten up together in high school?

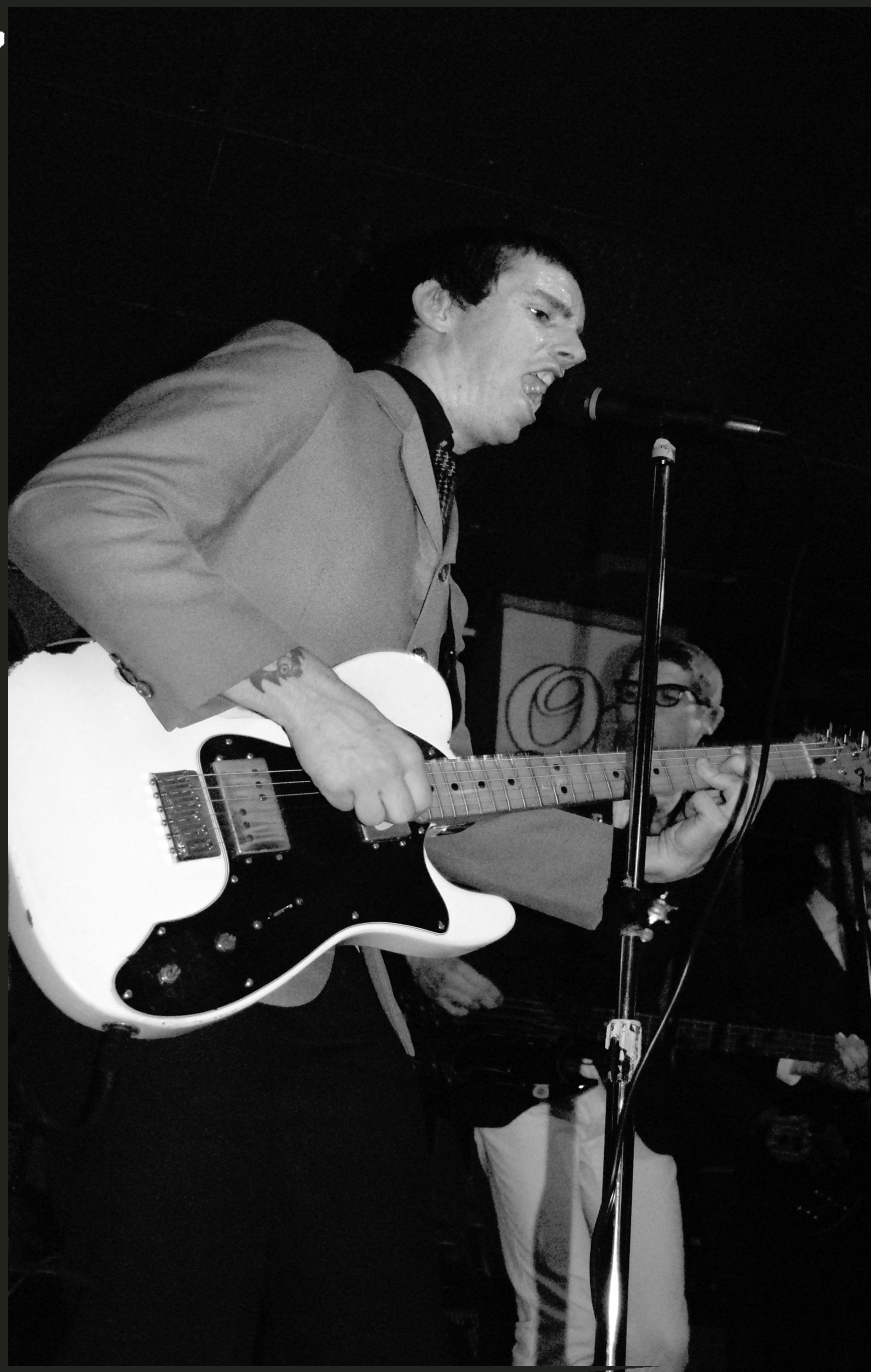
Jeffie: No, but Nick and Nardwuar have radio shows at CTR—beaten up?

Mike: [Laughs] That's probably the best question of the whole interview.



Photo By Femke Van Delft

I'M PRETTY SURE
THAT ME THINKING
SPEED
WAS A PRETTY COOL DRUG
HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH
QUADROPHENIA.





**It was definitely more interesting to watch
than a shirtless,**



U.S. AIR GUITAR CHAMPIONSHIP

My Experience at the U.S. Air Guitar Championship

By Joe Evans III

Illustrations by Steve Larder, www.stevelarder.co.uk

Layout by Uri Garcia

I remember when I first got into punk rock, how excited I was over every little possibility. "Screw the radio," I thought. "I'm going to start my *own* band and we're going to be great!" However, not knowing anyone else who wanted to start a band, this proved to be a little more difficult than I had expected. The big kicker was that the "cool" band was a group of kids who simply played air guitar to Blink 182 records at parties (or so I'd heard). And while I wouldn't really join any sort of "real" band until much later on, I was still determined to start the ultimate punk band to show these clowns how it was *really* supposed to be done.

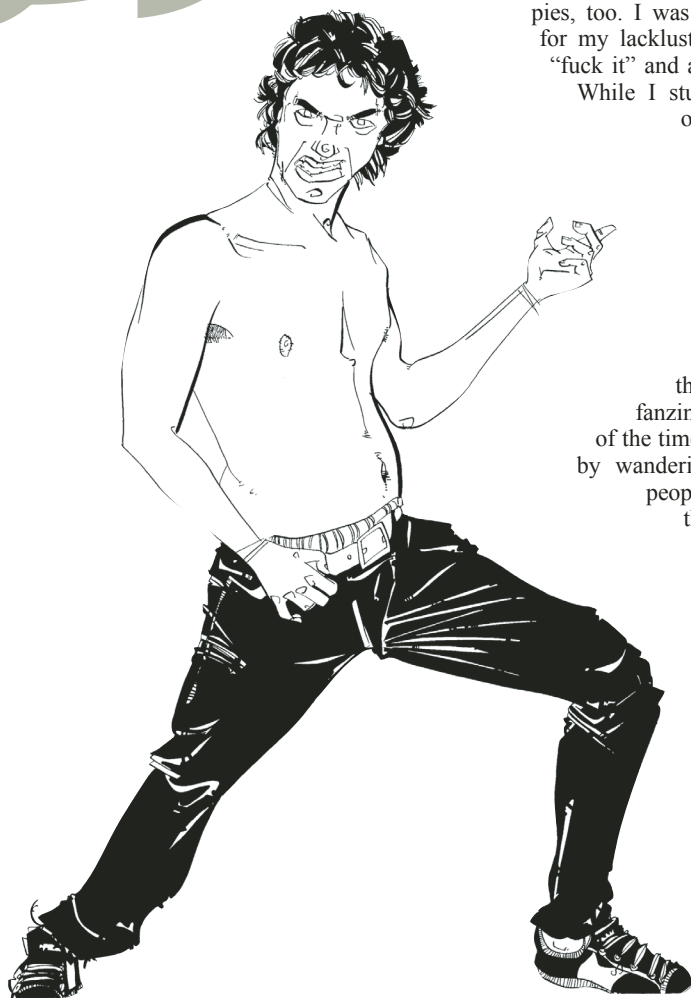
Fast forward to after having graduated college: I was at a show in New York City, meeting up with my friend Bill who told me he was going to leave early to catch a later bar show. Another friend of his from out of town was going to be competing in the U.S. Air Guitar Championship. I laughed to myself, thinking, "Yeah, whatever. What a big joke that'll be." After all, it's typically as embarrassing for a dude to be caught masturbating as it is playing air guitar. Imagine my surprise when, on my way home, I got the text message: "My friend won! He's going to Finland!" What I failed to realize is that Bill's friend is Craig "Hot Lixx" Hulahan, known not only from the numerous bands he's been in (including Love Songs, This Is My Fist!, and Conquest For Death, not to mention some of his former bands like Your Mother and All You Can Eat), but his always-impressive and entertaining stage presence—imagine Ben Stiller, with a voice that rivals (and almost tops, actually) Weird Al Yankovic, who's so unpretentious that he's willing to hump a dude's face in front of a full crowd in the pursuit of a good laugh (which I have personally witnessed [not to mention been on the receiving end of], within minutes of the first time I met him). I was, and am, in awe.

Fast forward one last time to now, when Bill also informed me that with a little bit of creative e-mailing, posing as a "music journalist" (note the quotes in relation to myself), I could most likely get in to this year's championship for free as Craig attempted to defend his title. A little exaggeration on my part later, I somehow managed to get myself on "the list."

The day of the championship, I snuck out of work early to get to the "show," (taking place at the Filmore New York at Irving Plaza, and completely sold out) picked up my press pass, and attended the "press conference." Basically, they set up a bunch of chairs in the lobby of the club and all the competitors introduced themselves in what appeared to be their "air-getups." I started to notice a comparison to professional wrestling (though, to be honest, I don't really know too much about either). These dudes were decked out in a bunch of different costumes,

teenage version of myself
in front of the mirror.

**Craig's
new move
involved jumping
over onto the
balcony, pulling
out a glass
bottle he'd
somehow hidden
over there, and
smashing it
over his head.**



ranging from hot pants, to tight neon-colored leather, to a tuxedo, to a dishwasher's uniform. Now, at first, I thought: "These guys must be crazy to do something like this," but after listening to them introduce themselves and answer questions, I actually started to wonder a little bit that there was a good chance that some of these guys really were legitimately crazy (especially after a fellow going by "Gentleman Joe," donned in a full tuxedo, sat down with a grin on his face, eyed the audience, simply said "Hi," got up, and walked away). I didn't want to attract much attention to myself, so I didn't say anything, but my friend Bill (who had returned again to cheer on Craig), asked a bunch of questions just to get some of the other performers riled up. Not only did they touch on the air guitar/masturbation comparison, but if nothing else came from the conference, I learned that the Air Guitar Championship is about world peace, because if you're holding an air guitar, you can't be holding a gun. Fascinating.

At the end of the press conference, we were told that there was free pizza. This news, in fact, saved my life, as I'd barely eaten anything all day. So Bill and I wandered around, trying to track it down, which, sadly, took a few minutes (I was really, *really* hungry), until we realized it was in the "band" dressing room. I scrambled to take what looked like the last regular slice, until I find out there were some other crazy pies, too. I was very upset with myself for my lackluster decision, until I said "fuck it" and ate a whole bunch more.

While I stuffed my face, a bunch of the performers were conducting various interviews with all sorts of different people. (I couldn't help but be amused by two different interviews being conducted side by side, one for FOX news, the other for someone's fanzine.) We killed off the rest of the time before the show started by wandering around the club as people slowly started making their way in. I realized that while leading up to it, I'd been thinking "Yeah! This is going to be awesome! *AIR GUITAR!*" I still wasn't really sure what I was getting myself into or what to expect.

The crowd was weird. There was a strange mix

of old people who probably heard about it in the paper and hipsters who don't actually go to shows any other time. On top of which, a bunch of the hipsters appeared to be street teamers for William Ocean, the competing hipster from New York City who Craig "Hott Lixx" defeated the year before. Admittedly, I'd been pretty excited to come out in support of Craig. I've done tons of things to help out my friends' bands, but to street team for an air guitar player? Come on!

Despite all the "air" talk, the show was opened up with a local band, Satanicide. They were a mock heavy metal band, but they were pretty funny, and they did, in fact, rock hard. While playing, they not only switched back and forth between instruments (and that's, literally, while playing), but also formed a giant human pyramid, which I decided to call "The Rock-amid." They were entertaining (for a band that actually plays instruments).

After Satanicide finished up, there was a brief wait as the competition got ready to start. The announcer/MC "Björn Türoque" came out and invited some people from the crowd to help him air-perform some Black Sabbath (who says the kids can't get involved?). Finally, they started the first round, as well as introduced the panel of judges, which included author Malcolm Gladwell, ACLU lawyer Ben Wizner, *Saturday Night Live* alum Rachel Dratch, and Jason Jones of *The Daily Show* (who dubbed himself "the asshole judge of the night"). Each of the sixteen contestants had a minute-long clip of music they pre-selected to perform their routine to, after which they were given scores on a four to six point basis, with the five highest scoring contestants making it to the finals.

We got what we all came for: the real action. During the first round as the contestants competed, I realized just how tricky it can be for someone to stick out and not be a dude that is "just" playing air guitar on stage in front of a packed club. I noticed that it was common practice to jump out into the crowd, or—in the case of tonight's venue—to jump over onto a small ledge near the side of the stage and jump back.

There were a few exceptional highlights, such as "Gentleman Joe" with his fancy tuxedo and ominous grin, and "Ricky Stickyfingers," who looked like he belonged in a punk band from Milwaukee. Also of note was Chicago's "Skeety Jones," who rocked some blues jams (and ripped off his dishwasher's outfit to reveal silver nipple tassels), and "Dr. Cami Airapist," who did a straight-up back flip while just standing. It was definitely more interesting to watch than a shirtless, teenage version of myself in front of the mirror.

Eventually, our friend/pick for the night "Hot Lixx Hulahan" came out, dressed in bright orange spandex pants and a pink leather vest. It also turned out that he was

wearing a small pair of briefs, as he started out by pulling them off (without actually taking off the pants) and throwing them into the audience, while Bill, a few others, and I cheered him on as loud as we could. As it had turned out, we'd actually seen Craig a few weeks earlier, playing with one of his current bands Conquest For Death. Ironically enough, he looked practically the same at both performances (minus the not actually having a guitar part). He scored *okay*, although it should be noted the judges had seemed to be pretty tough on everyone (with Jason Jones throwing out so many insults that he managed to provoke audience members to throw their beer cans at him). Shortly after, William Ocean came out to his street team erupting into applause (Seriously—a street team! For air guitar!), and proceeded to start his routine that was essentially more striptease than air guitar. We fought all the crowd's cheers with our snotty boos the best we could. Finishing out the first round was the 2005 champion, "Rockness Monster," who performed to Refused, and did what was easily the most impressive jump of the whole night (from the side balcony back to the stage—it was *huge*).

There was a brief intermission between the preliminaries and the finals as the scores were counted. Most of the crowd cleared out of the room, so Bill and I got up as close as we could. We were able to get almost next to the stage, ending up behind a fairly "bro" (in the four letter word type of way) kind of dude, who was overly drunk, repeatedly yelling "I'm at the *air guitar* show!" into his cell phone (which clearly had no service inside the club), and was constantly bumping into everyone around him, including an older couple standing next to him. After probably the fifth or sixth bump, the husband asked him to watch out and be careful, provoking some mumbled profanity from the dude. We then watched in shock and amazement as the husband immediately grabbed the guy by the throat with one hand, and started yelling at him to knock it off. The drunk guy started arguing. "What the hell, man? I'm just trying to enjoy the Air..." and turned and asked us, "Did you see what he did?" We tried convincing him to be the better man and drop it, but he wouldn't, and he kept arguing more and more, until he finally gave up and walked away. Granted, he returned, left, and returned again, but he finally stayed a few feet away. If nothing else, it put us just slightly closer to the stage.

After a few more minutes, they announced the finalists, which included McNallica, Big Rig, Rockness Monster, and both Craig and William Ocean. After bringing them back out onstage, the song that they'd all individually be performing to (which is, supposedly, "the hit of the summer," was played, even though Bill and I have never heard of it before). The competition was really getting fierce at this

point, as everyone was trying to give it their all, especially Big Rig, who poured a can of beer down what appeared to be an American flag thong and practically made out with his twin brother, a fellow air guitarist.

Craig's fancy new move involved jumping over onto the balcony, pulling out a glass bottle he'd somehow hidden over there, and smashing it over his head. I'm told that, apparently, William Ocean did the exact same routine he did last year: a somersault onto a beer can (only he uses *two* cans this year, instead of one). Granted, I can be a miserable bastard and am already pulling for Craig, but I was not impressed; however his street team (*Seriously! Street team!*) loved it and went wild. After his performance, while being talked to by the MC, someone lobbed a full can of beer at him, landing a perfect hit, square in the face, which appeared to break his nose. He started bleeding pretty badly. I couldn't help but feel a little bad, but screw that, it's kinda funny. (I mean, the guy wrote "ROCK" on his chest with stick-on gemstones, and *misspelled* it. How can I feel any sympathy?)

We reached the end of the night. From what we could tell, the scores were very close. Eventually, the finalists were brought back out (really—the ten minute delay was just nothing but suspense). And then the results were announced: In fifth place was Erin "McNallica" McNally. Tied for third were Randy "Big Rig" Layman and Craig. We were bummed, but we hoped that at least Rockness Monster would come out on top since it was his last year of competing. We were disappointed to find out that William Ocean had come out on top. The event concluded by inviting everyone on stage for a final air guitar jam, but we were too depressed by the results and left, making our way back to our respective homes.

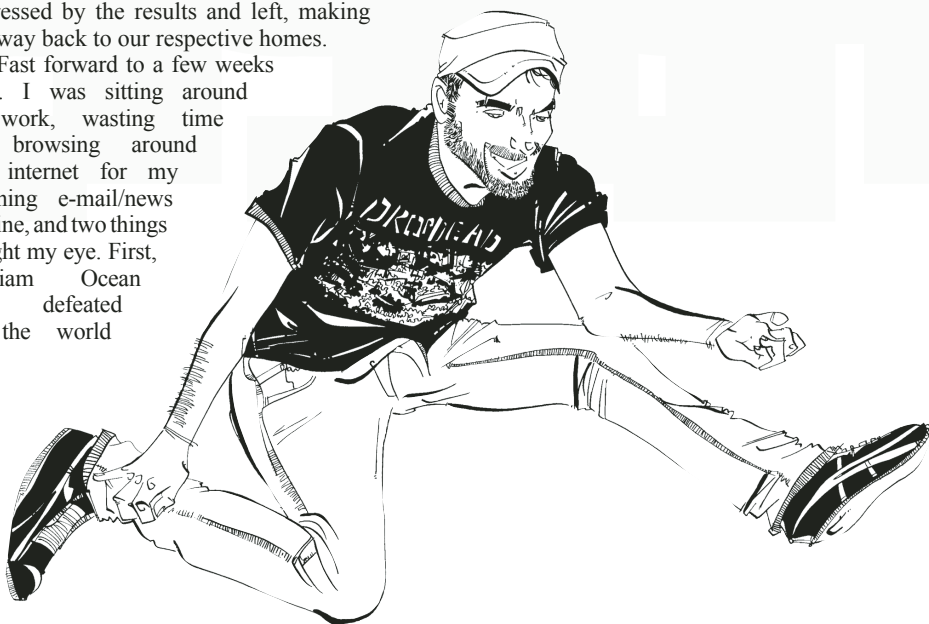
Fast forward to a few weeks later. I was sitting around at work, wasting time by browsing around the internet for my morning e-mail/news routine, and two things caught my eye. First, William Ocean was defeated in the world

championships. More importantly, second, while Ocean may have been leaving people disinterested across the globe, Conquest For Death was preparing for a tour of Africa. It seems that although he may have not reclaimed his title, Craig's still seeing just as much of the world with his bands (nothing new, considering the works his bands have done over the year, touring Japan, New Zealand, Israel, and more). All in all, I'll admit it: despite being guilty of the occasional jaded streak, I managed to find myself a bit caught up in this whole air guitar frenzy.

Let's face it; there are both solid dudes and jerks no matter where you go, and it's probably a lot more fun to see a great air guitarist—some of those guys really put on one a hell of a show when they're on stage—compared to a boring band that just stands there, painfully forcing their jams out. Besides, I'd rather hang out with someone who can play the hell out of some air guitar over some fake-ass wannabe rock star any day. (I also like the comparison of how it's great when my boss tells me, "Yeah, anything you need, I'll help you out," but it'd be a bit nicer if I got paid on time and got a response clearer than "What are you, a Jew? BWWAAHAHA!" when I ask about it.)

In the end, keeping in mind the spirit of air (the performance and the spectacle) and the last time I saw Conquest For Death, I feel I can safely say Craig is still a champion—even when he's wearing a guitar.

www.airguitarusa.com
www.hotlixxhulahan.com



THE REBEL



political punk's

INTERVIEW by ALLAN MACINNIS PHOTOS by JEN DODDS and

SPELL



Photo by Femke van Delft

I'd been bitching to members of the Vancouver Subhumans about how punk had lost a lot of its angry, idealistic Utopian edge since it "broke" as a safe consumable. Singer Brian "Wimpy Roy" Goble replied, challenging

me: "I think there's still that element out there. I don't know how popular it is. It's never been a popular end of the punk rock spectrum as far as I can see, but—you don't think there are still little cells of that that exist, on the extreme left wing end of punk?" I conceded that I was a bit out of the loop, since I tend to listen mostly to music that I knew from the old days—I'm thirty-nine, and my prime years of punk consumption were 1982-1992—but I still felt like something was missing. Despite the odd band like Propagandhi or Anti-Flag, the sort of idealism, misguided or otherwise, that led Subhumans bassist Gerry Hannah to give up music to become an urban guerrilla back in the early 1980s seemed in short supply—a holdover from the political activism of the '60s, long since dissipated as a cultural force. Since I'd gone on to finish a degree and get a straight, reasonably well-paying job as an ESL teacher, the clarity and passion of my punk days was also less and less present in my own personal life. Stifled by my assimilation into the middle classes, I was eager for something by which to be inspired.

It was around about this time that I saw the Rebel Spell for the first time, opening for DOA at Richards on Richards. The Rebel Spell was remarkable in their energy, and I could make out enough of the words that I knew I'd be poring over their lyric sheets later, something I've done less and less of since my teen years; their songs were angry populist speeches set to music. Some of their charisma was pure rockstar—their small blonde female guitarist, Erin, seems to have appropriated her onstage persona from male heavy metal guitarists of yore, which somehow makes me very happy to see, but there was also a clean, angry edge of idealism radiating from them—mostly from Todd, their lead singer and primary lyricist. I approached him at the merch table afterwards, surprised to find myself a tad intimidated. Lean and intense and mohawked, he presents as a pretty serious fellow (I didn't realize at the time he actually calls himself Todd Serious). I was impressed that their CDs were selling for only five dollars apiece—a pleasing bit of money/mouth congruency—and a little off put that the band had obscured their eyes and faces in the art; were they actually concerned about being recognized? Just how political were they, anyhow?

Our conversation was held at the band's home base in East Vancouver, in the lower-rent, arts-oriented Commercial Drive area.

not dead.

FEMKE VAN DELFT

LAYOUT by KEITH ROSSON

TODD: VOCALS**ERIN: GUITAR****CHRIS: BASS,
VOCALS****STEPHA: DRUMS**

Allan: You have references in your lyrics to the Zapatistas. Are you pretty well-read, when it comes to political stuff and labor history?

Chris: I think it's part of our lives. I wouldn't call myself well-read, but I try to keep up.

Todd: Chris reads the first chapter of anything he can get his hands on.

Chris: I'm in so many different books I'm not even really reading political stuff. I'm kinda reading caveman books.

Allan: Caveman books?

Chris: Ancient history and stuff.

Todd [correcting him]: *Pre-history.*

Allan: Does that tie in to your music?

Chris: I'm just interested in civilization. I'm trying to learn more about evolution I never really learned it in high school.

Todd: You weren't really *at* high school!

Chris [laughs]: No, I wasn't...but I read anything I can get my hands on, any "ism" you can throw at me.

Erin: I'm not so interested in the "isms." I'm more interested in social justice in general, so I don't subscribe to any particular ideology.

Allan: Are there particular issues you get passionate about?

Erin: A big issue of concern for me is the media and how it's concentrated. I think it really skews people's perspectives. It affects every other institution that there is, because dissenting voices get marginalized and they don't get heard as much. I just picked up *Mother Jones* magazine for the first time last week, you ever hear of it?

Allan: It's sort of a hippie magazine, right?

Erin: It's put out by American liberals—they're rich left-wing liberals, but I thought it was really good journalism. I'd never seen it before.

Allan: Do you do any writing for independent media?

Erin: Workin' on it, but no.

Allan: Song writing?

Erin: I don't help with the lyrics much. I'm not active in that way.

Allan: Why not?

Todd: It's kind of crushing to bring lyrics to me, because I'm so critical.

Erin: Well, I never even wanted to, really. What I'm doing is academic work. I'm going to school for international relations.

Allan: Leading to what?

Erin: It's a stepping stone to journalism, I think.

Chris: If we're talking why we choose to be a political punk band, it's because I've always been interested in it; the same with Todd. Before we even started the band, we were already reading the *Communist Manifesto* and other books. I always had an interest in politics and anarchism. I try my hardest to be a vegan and to condemn the shit that's going on in this world, through the crap food that people sell us and all the shit corporations that are just trying to rule you. So you live that life, and in anybody's mind, with politics, you always think you know best—so you just want to share you knowledge with people.

Like, let's say the song "December 8th 1980" that I wrote—I stumbled across, and was interested in, the conspiracy theory of...

Allan: Mark David Chapman being programmed by the CIA...

Chris: And Reagan and Bush (the first) being behind the murder of Lennon. And so I read about it, and it was a great song to write. I mean, (Vancouver radical folksinger) Joey Only said it best, "It's awesome about that song, you're actually teaching somebody something." When you read the lyrics...we got emails from kids, they email you back and they say, "Oh yeah, we had to go look up Reagan, and he is a douche!" Or, was a douche.

Todd: "...Though he happened before I was born."

Chris: I mean, we're not necessarily teaching history, but—we're teaching history! A song like "The Strikers," my whole purpose behind that is to tell people not to take shit from your boss. At shows I say, "If your boss isn't paying enough, steal from him."

Allan: Do you encounter any sort of prejudice against your politics? Like, in "December 8th, 1980," you're encouraging John Hinckley Jr. to "shoot straight" next time.

Chris: That's seriously the best line ever. Down south, I think when we were in Arizona, I met some U.S. Marines at one show and the *Days of Rage* CD—there's some kinda anti-military stuff in there, some Osama bin Laden thing—and one guy asked, "What's this all about?"

Allan: I don't know all the lyrics. There's a reference to Osama bin Laden?

Chris: No!

Todd [laughing, confused]: I'm like, "What?"

Chris: It's for the song "Truth Crew," so for the artwork, I did a collage. I wanted to throw a picture of him in there.

Erin: We don't get contradicted very much. People are very supportive.

Todd: Yeah, that's just it. We go to the States, yeah, but we go to hang out with punks. One guy in Las Vegas identified himself as a Republican punk or something.

Erin [Laughs]: Yeah!

Todd: I'm like, "Dude, it's an oxymoron." I'm not one to say there are rules to things, but I don't think that that can be.

Chris: That's like Michale Graves, the singer from the Misfits, he's a Republican punk. [Stephen] Colbert does a report on him. It's fuckin' funny.

Erin: We've been getting lots of orders from military bases!

Todd: Well, I think that's just. You look at any numbers on the military, how unhappy American soldiers are in general, they're just getting sucked in.

Chris: I'm paranoid. Last night, this guy called me, and he asked if we're playing and I'm thinking he means that show in Seattle, so I'm thinking he's a border agent seeing if I'm crossing the border.

Allan: Do the U.S. border guys ever hassle you for being punks? I mean—I'm an old fart, so I'm coming from a time when being a punk got you beaten up and hassled a lot, but punk seems to have become a lot more mainstream now.

Todd: As an individual, you might have a little less trouble at the border for your appearance—like, having a funny hairdo or whatever—that's a little more accepted, I think, but it's so strict now, and they're *so* after bands, We get away with stuff because it's two guys and two girls crossing, so they think "A couple of couples." They don't look at it like a band. If they see four dudes in a van, you're *done*, man; it's over.

Chris: Not always, because people do make it through, but in some fucked up weird way, like, "*How did you do that?*"

Erin: The issue isn't that we look freaky or that we're punk rockers. It's that we're gonna go down and destroy their economy by making too much money.

Allan: So CDs and whatnot?

Todd: We never bring *anything*. A guitar pick in your pocket is pushin' it.

Allan: You bring guitars and stuff?

Todd: No.

Chris: Are you sure we should be telling this for an interview, for a magazine?

Allan: For an *American* magazine.

Todd [deadpan]: We've never been to the States.

Allan: Right! I see. [Laughter all round]. You're funnier than I thought you would be, given your lyrics.

Todd: I'm not bein' funny!

Allan: Talkin' about history: the Subhumans, Gerry Hannah (Again, last names are okay), and Direct Action (the radical group he belonged to, also known as the Squamish Five or sometimes the Vancouver Five): how do you guys feel about that stuff? How does that bear on you as punks? I mean—you were all born in the early '80s?

Todd: Yeah, roughly.

Erin: [giggles].

Allan: 'Cause I was fourteen when that happened, so I was getting interested in punk when Gerry got arrested and DOA put out the *Right to be Wild* single with "Burn It Down" and Gerry's "Fuck You" as a benefit...

Chris: As a teenager, I remember something about Gerry moving to 'round about where we were living, in Williams Lake (a fairly rural area of BC; Gerry Hannah's an outdoors person). I don't know if I'd just moved there or where I was at that time, and kids were talking about this guy from the Subhumans showing up and stuff. And I was pretty young. And the Subhumans—I never even realized for so long that there was a U.K. Subhumans. I see these kids with patches everywhere, and I'm like, "Wow, the Subhumans are back!"

Erin: I don't think it's okay to use violence, ever, to make a political point, but in that particular circumstance, they were blowing up a weapons plant. This was during the Cold

"If your boss isn't paying enough, STEAL FROM HIM."

War, as well—so I can sorta see a justification for what they did.

Allan: Most people sympathize with their aims, but not their methods.

Todd: I sympathize with their methods *and* their aims.

Erin: Back then, everybody had this nuclear threat hanging over their heads. The whole planet could be destroyed at the push of a button.

Todd: We have that threat now.

Allan: Yeah, but we were more afraid of it then. Why aren't we afraid of it now?

Chris: It's not a novelty now, but the threat's still hugely there. The Americans never got rid of their missiles.

Erin: The situation's a bit different. It's not an active hostility. Now it would be more like an accident.

Chris: Yeah, but I've seen some stuff on the internet, what some guys in China are saying about the U.S., and that's pretty hostile.

Erin: What were they saying?

Chris: That "If Americans ever got involved with Taiwan or anything like that, I don't care if we spend billions of our own people, we'll wipe you out."

Allan: The Chinese are saying that?

Chris: Well, I don't want those guys comin' after me, so you gotta check the source on that one... [laughter].

Todd: Now the Chinese *and* the Americans are after Chris!

Chris: You can judge for yourself, but I read that from a statement on the 'net. I'm not just reading Wikipedia. But that's a somewhat serious threat. The North Korean situation, that got somewhat resolved—they've been given aid—but the guy makes his whole country shave his head just like him. He's nuts, okay?

Erin: But Russia, they've got 30,000 warheads hanging around. So do the States, but Russia doesn't have the infrastructure right now to take care of it. They're laying off their soldiers...

Chris: The States wants to put a missile base in the Czech Republic. That's like



Photo by Femke van Delft

putting their own missiles over there...

Erin: Getting ready for Iran or something.

Allan: What's your opinion of punk as a motivating force now?

Todd: I think music's been used for movements as long as you can remember. If you just hit people with straight rhetoric, it's often difficult to get through. When you get some people on a more emotional angle, which is where music connects the two things—I think people are receptive to it in a different way. As far as the state of punk, I think punk's become a lot less political than it was.

Allan: Why do you think that happened?

Todd: 'Cause people caught on to the style of the music, and it's just become a standard style you can harvest if you want to make music.

Erin: Or just a fashion.

Todd: Yeah, but we're talking about music, so let's just ignore that for a sec'. It's a style of music to draw on. You can just take some of that. You don't have to have any of the ideals; you just might want to take that part

of the music. Whereas before, when it started, it was kids making music for kids, so it was inherently just attached to the feelings of youth at the time. Now it doesn't have to be.

Allan: How did you get started listening to punk? Was the politics of it one of the draws?

Erin: For me it was, because in Victoria, the scene was *really* political. It was just, "come to the youth center and see some bands." At that point, I didn't really care at all. I was fourteen; it didn't mean anything to me, but they had the little zines and the propaganda and I just started thinking about those issues.

Allan: What bands were you listening to at the time?

Erin: Back then, it was Hudson Mack, Black Kronstadt, Goat Boy, and Ultra-Vires.

Allan: None of whom I have heard of.

Todd: Yeah, for me it was the same thing. I got into punk from skateboarding, so the politics weren't really a part of it, but then, when I got into underground music a little more, it was music from Victoria that really had those politics that totally made me start learning about that stuff.

Todd: I believe in violence.

Allan: You believe in violence.

Todd: Just for the record.

Allan: Are you from Victoria?

Todd: No, I was raised in the interior (of BC), in Williams Lake (far, far away from Victoria).

Allan: But you were hearing Victoria music?

Todd: Yeah, it was funny actually. We had a friend and we would go there and buy tapes out of the music store up there and so these people knew all these underground punk tapes were going to Williams Lake. And then I finally got to meet Tony, who was in Lootbag, which was the big one, like everybody just *loved* Lootbag up there, and he just thought that was so funny, because they never played off the island (i.e., off Vancouver Island, the land mass Victoria is on).

Todd: Anyway, we were getting these tapes, and we just thought they were the greatest thing ever. He would have had no idea that he'd have 500 kids show up if he played a show up there, but...

Chris: Sixteen at Williams Lake, I had the Laughing Stock/ Goat Boy split tape, and the Lootbag tape, and then I had Shutdown from Victoria. Those were my tapes, from two different people who spent summers in Victoria and would bring these tapes back. That's why I originally moved to Victoria, to go play with my band there. At nineteen, I moved there—my first time ever being there—to go play music.

Todd: So it's interesting that Erin was from there and we were these kids from Williams Lake.

Allan: How did you guys hook up?

Erin: I met Todd through a *Georgia Straight* (a well-known Vancouver weekly noted for entertainment listings and a progressive point of view) ad.

Todd: She was the ad; she was the guitar player, looking for a band.

Erin: I was in another band, but it wasn't working out so good, so I was looking for a side-project.

Allan: So you were originally into punk rock? I mean...I don't mean this as an insult, but there's something kinda metal about your guitar.

Erin: [small laugh] I started playing years before I was into punk rock.

Allan: What were your original influences?

Chris: [whispers darkly] AC/DC.

Erin, Allan: [laughter].

Erin: No, you know, I was twelve, I was reading and noodling off the tabs in *Guitar World*—taking lessons, whatever the teacher would...

Allan: Guitarists that you liked?

Erin: [blushing] Slash and Angus.

Allan: [laughing] It's okay!

Todd: No, it's good. We would *never* get this out of her if you weren't here.

Erin: Whatever.

Allan: And now?

Erin: Now? Well, I stopped reading those magazines because they were so...

Todd: Horrible.

Erin: I lost interest in the mainstream magazines because they were all sort of macho and stupid, their whole tone, their target audience is like fourteen-year-old boys, and I was not that anymore.

Todd: After the operation. [Snickering]

Erin: I don't know about a guitar player that influences me now.

Allan: How about women in rock? Any ones that you look up to?

Erin: I really like the riot girl scene, like L7 and Babes in Toyland. I really liked Nashville Pussy when they were big. That's something I don't like to say in front of these guys.

Allan: They're not the most...*liberal* band.

Erin: No, not at all, but I saw them live and she was just so incredible.

Allan: Raunchy female power?

Erin: [chuckles] I don't like to say it like that. It sounds pretty cheesy, awful. But no, she's a sweet guitar player, she's awesome.

Allan: Do you guys have any ideological arguments? Are you vegan, as well?



Photo by Fennie von Doff

TODD: It's another kind of invasion. I fully believe that you have every right to...

CHRIS: Drag them out into the street...

TODD AND CHRIS: And shoot them in the face.

ALLAN: Uh-huh.
(To Erin): They're very male.



Photo by Jen Dodds

Todd: No, I'm vegetarian. I'll starve to death if I eat vegan.

Erin: I'm barely even a vegetarian.

Chris: I'm not vegan. I'm about 90%, but I'm eating non-lactose cheese right now. It's organic. And I eat eggs, and sometimes I have to buy pizza, because it's all I can get.

Todd: If you're going to travel or anything, it's so hard on the road.

Chris: You gotta bring a bag of nuts and fruit.

Todd: It's funny, because the band is the reason I own a car. The band is the reason I'm not vegan. It's just kinda fucked up.

Chris: Yep.

Erin: [reminding the guys] But he wants a fight out of us.

Chris: Like, we argue a lot about stuff. We fight about a lot of different ideas, like—sometimes we argue about this whole...

Todd: We don't even want to go there!

Erin: Don't go there!

Todd: I argue against misinformation and ignorance, and I get mad when...

Chris: [in mock indignation?] So you're saying I'm misinformed!?

Allan: [laughing in delight]

Todd: No, I didn't say that! I said the only time you'll get me mad is when you make a statement which you *know* sounds misinformed to see if you can get me mad!

Chris: Yeah, well...

Todd: So that's a good way to get me going... There's a lot of horrible misinformation out there, and we are all children of the '80s, and the Red Scare, so there's a lot of stupidity around that.

Allan: Would you all be comfortable describing yourselves as socialists or communists?

Erin: [Shakes her head. There is a long pause.] I'd call myself a feminist, but beyond that...

Todd: It's scary to say you subscribe to a particular ideology, because people have so much misinformation around them that they assume all these things that they think they know about these ideologies, which don't fit.

Allan: Okay.

Todd: [with increasing passion] So I could explain for an hour where I sit, but I do sit somewhere kinda in the anarcho-socialist kind of realm, right. I would take either of those and object seriously to the anarchist's lack of any kind of feasible plan, but I also disagree with several parts of a traditional socialist view. Now as soon as you say that, people start attaching it to past regimes which they figure were flying a certain flag—and *may* have been flying a certain flag, just like the U.S. calls itself a democratic state. So, if you want to call anything that's occurred in the past, if you want to go into history and call something communist or socialist state, *fuck you*, okay? You need to look at the what the ideology behind that is, and know it very clearly at it before you can call yourself that—and don't run someone down because of history, don't run down their idea down just because of history, because it's just like saying, "I believe in democracy," and someone going, "Oh, you're a fuckin' American, then!"

That stuff just *gets* me.

Allan: But, the Zapatistas, for example: you see them as a pretty positive example of people organizing?

Todd: I think a people's right as a group, to choose how they live, is one thing. Within that culture, repression, oppression will develop, regardless of what you do, because people are people and they aren't perfect. But if you look at, from the outside, what they've

done—indigenous autonomy is the part of that that does it for me, and, as for standing up to this accelerated capitalism that's trying to move into Mexico? Right on: give me a gun.

Allan: Have you guys ever played in a situation like that—squats in Europe, or played Mexico?

Todd: We've never been off this continent as a band.

Erin: We've never been to Mexico, either.

Allan: Is it something you want to do?

Todd: I'd certainly play anywhere, and if there's something you can lend to somebody by your music, supporting them by being there, then sure, great. And if I put an idea in someone's head, they might want to learn about it. I've seen evidence of that. People are influenced in some way, and they learn about these things because of the music. In that song you're referring to ("Rebels Sing"), I refer to a bunch of different things—the Sandinistas, the People's Army, which is referring to the ongoing revolution in Nepal. And it's just to put that idea out there, so few people are aware these things are going on, because you never hear about it in the mainstream media.

Allan: Right.

Todd: You heard about it when the Nepalese—when the prince went crazy and shot a bunch of people in the palace. You didn't hear about the revolution that's been going on in that country for ten years, right? I just wanted to put that out there so someone would hear it.

Allan: One other thing about that song: you talk about Wolverine ("Wolverine is not far away/ he's in our hearts/ he's on this stage/ Wolverine is not make believe/ He can't be held back/ he's in a rage.") This cannot possibly be an X-men reference, can it?

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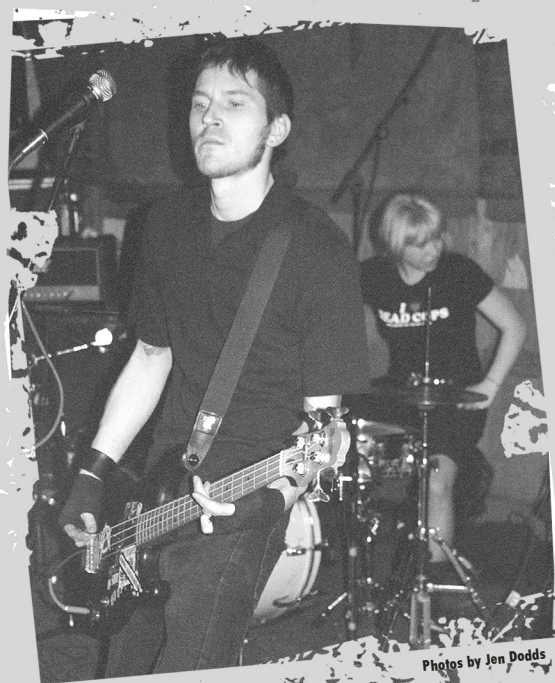
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Photos by Jen Dodds

Todd: The Wolverine I'm referring to is William Jones Ignace. Wolverine was a prominent figure in the Gustafsen Lake standoff of 1995 (in which Native American activists, led by Ignace, occupied land that had been traditionally used for Sun Dances, and was in danger of being taken away, spawning a huge government reaction and media disinformation campaign). He and his cohorts stood against the largest paramilitary/RCMP mobilization in Canadian history. I'm kinda playing with the renown of the comic book Wolverine versus the real life hero who no one knows about. British Columbia is largely untreated still and illegally occupied!

Allan: You're not First Nations, are you? (First Nations is the most politically correct designation for Canada's aboriginal people: Native Americans).

Todd: No, we're all colonist blood here. The interest in First Nations issues comes from a belief in justice.

Chris: I think the older I'm getting and the more I'm learning about certain things, it's just becoming so overwhelming. And even, you know, I read a lot of books about anarchism, I read a lot of books about communism, and, books about religion—everything. I'm reading this Leninist book by Sergey Nechayev, and he talks about the true revolutionary, and who this person has to be, and it's so intense that if you try to think about it, if you have to *be* this person, it makes you sick to your stomach, because it's something you couldn't possibly ever do, as a human. Like they say, you have to detach yourself from everything. You have to be, at all times, the enemy of the state. There's no in between, "I'm just gonna hop in the car and whip down to my buddy's house," y'know—the convenient, 'cause you're still giving into that system. With the Squamish Five situation, when something like that happens—if you can put yourselves in their

shoes, like, that would be terrifying. I mean, I've been scared sometimes, but that would be *scary*. Now you're running for your life, running not to be put into jail.

Allan: Gerry has said as much to me: that he found it really stressful, and that part of him was grateful they were caught.

Chris: My wife's grandfather asked me, when I sat down at the kitchen table, when I first met him—he fought in WWII, and the first thing, he seen my AK-47 sewn onto my sleeve, he said, "Are you a revolutionary?" I didn't know what to say. And Samara's [Chris' wife] told me her grandfather is cool or whatever. But I didn't know if this old guy, if he's gonna punch me, or...

Todd: Or what that meant to him, because of the misinformation that's been pumped into his brain.

Allan: Well, the photos of you guys in the anarchist masks in the artwork for *Days of Rage*...

Erin: [giggles] I like it for aesthetic reasons, let alone the political reasons. A lot of bands are so narcissistic and they'll have glossy promo shots that they hand out to everyone.

Allan: [laughing]

Todd: The idea was to put pictures in and not have faces, so the border guards can't see who we are.

Allan: I don't think those pictures will make the border guards think of you in a fonder way.

Todd: No, no. But if they can see it, they can harvest our image, and then flag us.

Chris: I think, even on both our CDs, "What could I just put on there that would be so awesome, y'know? *Fuck the Police*, NWA—straight up, on the back of the CD (*Expression in Layman's Terms*)?" That's awesome. Now it's on the record. You've got to pull the record out to see it. I think I took it off the CD. But in *Days of Rage*, it was my idea to

be somewhat a little bit harsh—it's not ultra harsh because I've seen harsher shit. But now it stresses me out, because when cops pull us over and look at our merch it says "Fuck the Pigs" on there.

Chris: With *Days of Rage*, I was reading about the Weather Underground, and that's where it comes from, there was this riot in Chicago—the Days of Rage, and that's where I got this idea. They just kinda seized the moment. And the whole concept behind everything there, with the communiqué was this anarchist militant vibe to it—what I tried to put into that. We're not necessarily militant in a military violent way, and our communiqué is pretty pacifist.

Todd: I believe in violence.

Allan: You believe in violence.

Todd: Just for the record.

Allan: Well, come on—you went there before, saying you subscribe to direct action as a method. How far would you take that?

Todd: Well, there's two different ways to look at that. It just kills me when people say "pacifist." If I burst into your door at your family reunion and start shooting people, one at a time, and start making my way through your house, and you reach over and grab grandpa's shotgun: if you call yourself a pacifist, what are you going to do? You're gonna fuckin' blow me away.

Chris: But that's not...you're a pacifist. You're completely...

Todd: No, you're not.

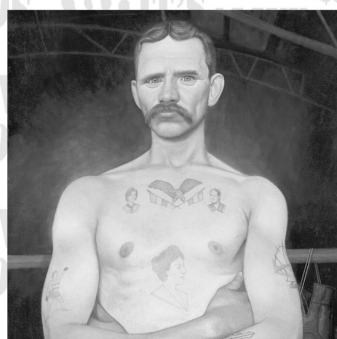
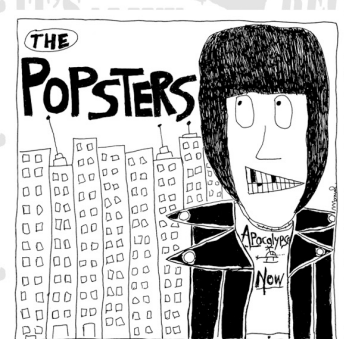
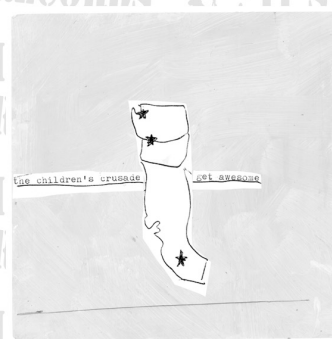
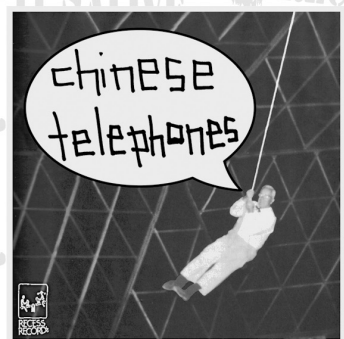
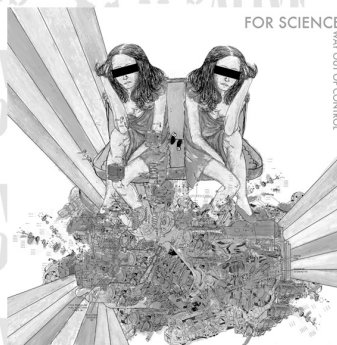
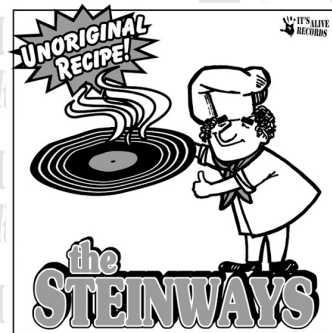
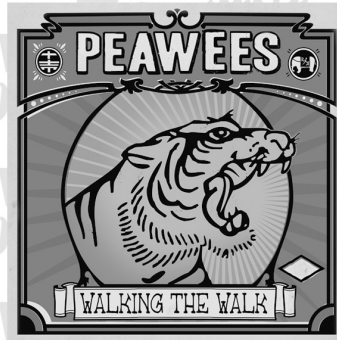
Chris: But that's like anything!

Todd: Hold on! Back up: you now are an indigenous group, and a bunch of yahoos land and start raping and pillaging. Are you going to sit down and let them do that?

Chris: Never.

Todd: Okay, what about these people, they come and they massively take over your country or your space? I don't believe in

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borders, per se, but at some point you have to do it: "This is my space," right? And they come in and they start destroying things, they set things up, and they just slowly destroy your culture. They erode it away by encroaching on it and polluting it until it's gone. I don't see that as any different. It's another kind of invasion. I fully believe that you have every right to...

Chris: Drag them out into the street...

Chris and Todd: And shoot them in the face.

Allan: Uh-huh. [To Erin]: They're very male [chuckles].

Chris: [laughing] I can give you some photos of us with guns, if you need photos. Erin with a shotgun or a handgun: what do you want to see? She's as male as us!

Todd: Just to clarify a few things: I don't like the idea of people being hurt for any reason, and I'd do anything to prevent that, but there is a line where you have to be willing to fight, because all you can do is die or be wiped out. Whether it's the current form of cultural genocide that's occurring to the native people here or all around the world, so you have a group like the Zapatistas that stand up and say, "We're going to use violence if necessary to stop what's going on." I totally agree with violence in that regard.

Allan: Let me ask you about giving stuff up, making sacrifices, not participating in consumer capitalism—what do you guys do in your lives? Like, you were living collectively for awhile, right?

Chris: Yeah.

Todd: We were stuck together because of poverty, yeah!

Chris: There was at one point ten of us together in the house, for quite awhile, and it was awesome, because I didn't work for a huge chunk of it, and I was gettin' fed tortillas and beans and rice every night. That was pretty rad! And then when I did come into money, I got to throw my share in a bit.

In that sense, how we were living was very anarchistic, because not all of us had much, but some people did, and they shared. There was never really an issue; we all shared that space. Even how we rented out the certain rooms and whatnot—who paid what. I slept on the porch in a tent for two months and only had to play a hundred bucks a month, which was pretty rad. But I was still sleepin' on the porch, listening to people steal our empties.

Allan: [chuckles] But that's more just being poor.

Todd: Yeah, well, there's a choice to go and get a real job or whatever.

Chris: But you can be poor with people. I was poor with people before, and this guy's throwing his food in the garbage while me and another person—actually, it was Stepha (the absent drummer)—are boiling cabbage to eat. We're like, "Holy shit!" and I gave him a place to stay. We didn't have money. That's why I gave him a place to stay like that.

Allan: It's strange how it works, though. The most ethical ways to live are extremely difficult and not very appealing. You have to swim upstream all the time.

Erin: I think your question really relates to how screwed up our economic system is. The easiest thing to do is the worst thing to do. We haven't incorporated social costs into the things we buy.

Allan: Sure: the cheapest way to live is to shop at Wal-Mart.

Erin: Yeah, absolutely, and it's just really hard to be ethical the way society is now.

Todd: I was thinking about this because we ran into this street punk that we know from down here. The guy's lived on the street for as long as I've been in Vancouver, but he was over in Victoria for the winter and he came to our show the other night. And I was thinkin' about it; people are so down on people that are living like that. And I was thinking, well, what's the size of his

ecological footprint? It's smaller than yours, y'know?

Chris: He's the one who gets to snub us, because he's doing it, full on. He may be living in the city, or whatever, so he's not completely...that's the ultimate thing, too: to be like a total green. People have to leave as little waste as possible. I mean, the energy we're using up in this place is already disgusting. The fact that some of us drove here, or used whatever to get here, when we could have walked or rode a bike.

Allan: The other question I wanted to ask you is about keeping the price of your CDs so low. On the one hand, it seems great and idealistic, but on the other, I wonder about it as a business model.

Todd: It's a really crappy business model! The best part of our business model is that we sell T-shirts for twenty dollars. Music should be...I like to give it away, and sometimes I do, a lot. But if you're going to make money off something, why not make T-shirts instead? I mean, we're not making any money at this. This is the wrong thing to do for money.

Allan: But at the same time, punk is becoming a mass-produced phenomenon.

Todd: No it's not. That's pop music. As soon as it gets there, it's pop music.

Chris: And that's the thing, and I think, the way do this, we like to stay as punk as we can for as long as we can. I don't have a vision of reachin', like, the Warped Tour stage or anything like that, and hawkin' a bunch of red shirts and some yellow shirts and blue shirts.

Todd: No colored shirts!

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**"THE EASIEST THING TO DO
IS THE WORST THING TO DO."**



Photo by Ian Dodds

TOP FIVES

RAZORCAKE STAFF

Adrian Salas

Top 5 Lyrics from Steve Albini Bands

5. "Kill the dog."-Big Black, "Things to Do Today"
4. "I suppose I'm not too threatening presently but wait 'til I start Nautilus."-Rapeman, "Up Beat"
3. "This here's Jordan, we do what we like."-Big Black, "Jordan, Minnesota"
2. "I was born wearing pants."-Shellac, "Be Prepared"
1. Tie between the entirety of "Prayer to God" by Shellac, or "Kerosene" by Big Black

Amy Adoyzie

Top 5 Awesomeness I Wish I Could Take with Me to Bangla-fucking-desh

- Friends: APS, CMW, BDW, MLA, ALE, FOSE, AFS, JCM, BPB, ARM, KMR, & NAS
- Green Noise Records
- Portland Summers
- China Loca
- Hamm's

Art Ettinger

- Wretched Ones, *Make It Happen* CD
- Underground Railroad to

Candyland, *Bird Roughs* LP

- Carbonas, Self-titled (third album) LP
- Children's Crusade, *Get Awesome 10"*
- Something Fierce / Hangouts, *Split 7"*

Ben Snakepit

1. Deskonocitos, live
2. The Sass Dragons side of the Sass Dragons/Party Garbage split 7"
3. Andy Dale Petty, *Sings the Lonesome Country Wail*
4. The Matt Kurz On, live
5. Sleepwalkers RIP, 7"

Buttertooth

1. Hostile Combover, Self-titled CD
2. Fever Sleeves, CDEP
3. Tera Melos, *Complex Full of Phantoms*, CD
4. Behind the Wagon: live only. Record already!
5. Prize Country, *Lottery of Recognition*

Chris Pepus

- Norman Mailer writing until the end.
- James Wolcott's short film about Norman Mailer for WNET-TV
- Agent Orange and the Avengers coming to St. Louis the same week
- *John Cassavetes: Five Films* (DVD set)
- Seymour Hersh's *New Yorker* articles on Bush, the Saudis, and Iran

Constantine Koutsoutis

1. *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72* by Hunter S Thompson (book)
2. Being called "successful" as a writer by a friend.
3. Sneaking our own bottle of superior whiskey in the bar with my best friend. We're mad criminal.
4. Singing Hot Water Music's "Free Radio Gainesville" out loud on the subway.
5. *Take It, Somebody*, Modern Machines

Craven Rock

- (Counting Down)
5. *Tao Te Ching*, Lao Tzu (book)
 4. Turkey Day Ride in Sacramento
 3. Dinosaur Jr, *Beyond* (CD)
 2. Neil Young, *Living with War* (CD)
 1. *Creating True Peace* by Thich Nhat Hanh (book)

Cristy C. Road

Top 5 Bands to Bone to in the Winter; While It's Snowing

1. Nile
2. At The Gates
3. Envy
4. Saetia
5. The Slackers (after you get wasted and it feels like summer again).

Daryl Gussin

- "Hallowed Ground," High Tension Wires
- B-side of the Poison Control 7"
- Witches With Dicks: *American Railroads 7"*
- Fucked Up: *Year of the Pig 12"*
- *Children of Men* (the perfect cinematic representation of crust)

Dave Disorder

1. Blotto, *Remember Buy the Vinyl First... Singles Collection 2004-07* CD
2. Underground Railroad To Candyland, *Bird Roughs* CD
3. Dear Landlord / Chinese Telephones, Split 7
4. Ergs, *Upstairs /Downstairs* CD
5. Witches With Dicks, *American Railroads 7"*

Denise Orton

Top 5 Things That Suck About Living in Gainesville

1. College football directly affects my livelihood.
2. Gator Cuts, Gator Alarm, Gatorfood.com....
3. It's 89 degrees in December
4. Gator fans
5. Alligators

Designated Dale

Top 5 Bands at The Masque 30th Anniversary/Book Release Show (11-11-07 at The Echoplex in Echo Park, East Los Angeles

1. The Eyes
2. The Crowd
3. The Controllers
4. The Dogs
5. The Plugz

Donofthedeath

- Red Dons: *Death to Idealism*, CD
- Pat Benatar, *Best of* CD
- The Assassimators, Self-titled 7"
- Born/Dead, *The Final Collapse* LP
- After the Bombs, *Relentless Onslaught 12"*

Jennifer Whiteford

1. The Hot Toddlies, *Smell the Mitten* CD
2. *Wallflower at the Orgy* by Nora Ephron (essays)

Having the
choice to blow my brains out
or listen to stupid people.

3. My job getting changed from contract to permanent, woot!
4. *The Wire*, Season Four (DVD)
5. The snow... and four wheel drive.

Jenny Moncayo

1. My cousin getting a tattoo of a portrait of my grandma on his forearm.
2. Being able to walk to bars and stumble back to my apartment drunk.
3. The Razorcake benefit show with Underground Railroad To Candyland, Dan Padilla, and God Equals Genocide in Los Angeles at Safari Sam's 11/25/07.
4. The Chicago deep dish pizza at Masa in Echo Park.
5. Joining the gym.

Joe Evans III

1. Full Of Fancy, *Sweet Baby Jesus* CD
2. The Sass Dragons/Party Garbage, *Split 7"*
3. Endless Mike And The Beagle Club, *The Husky Tenor* CD
4. Chinese Telephones, Self-titled CD
5. Triclops!, Four Letter Word, The Arrivals, Off With Their Heads, and Underground Railroad to Candyland, live at Lost and Found in Brooklyn.

Julia Smut

- Spending my first Christmas in three years with Damon and NOT having to go to Kansas to do so.
- The Crowd, *Letter Bomb* re-issue on TKO
- Having the choice to blow my brains out or listen to stupid people.
- Dunkin Donuts coffee
- The Frogs

Keith Rosson

Top 5 Wimpy Acoustic Ballad-Things That Make Me Feel All

Cool When I Hear 'Em

- Sundowner, "Midsummer Classic"
- American Steel, "Hurtlin'"
- Greg Macpherson, "Bankrobber"*
- Josh Ritter, "Thin Blue Flame"
- Madison Bloodbath, "A New England"*
- *Yeah, I know they're covers, dirtmouth.

Kurt Morris

1. Pig Destroyer, *Phantom Limb*
2. Quicksand, *Slip*
3. *No Country for Old Men* (movie)
4. Trader Joe's Bean and Cheese Burritos
5. Reading, reading, reading

Lauren Measure

Top 5 Recently Discovered Bands Who I Wish Lived in My Town

1. Traffic and Weather
2. Vena Cava
3. The Deep and Holy Sea / Cassette
4. The Riot Before
5. Amateur Party

Lauren Trout

Favorite Songs to Dance Around the House to When I Wake Up

- "Age of Consent" by New Order
- "Got a Backbeat" by American Steel
- "Sympathy for the Devil" by The Rolling Stones
- "Hold My Life" by The Replacements
- "White Wedding" by Billy Idol

Lord Kveldeufur

1. 86 Mentality, *Final Exit 7"*
2. Brats and kraut for Thanksgiving dinner
3. An 11-2 Green Bay Packer squad at the time of this writing
4. 123 Linden Street
5. John Niles, *Homo Narrans* (book)

Megan Pants

Top 5 Songs to Listen to On Repeat while in the Depths of a Chicago Depression

- Red Forty: "Outsider"
- Replacements: "If Only You Were Lonely"
- Billy Bragg and Wilco, "California Stars"
- Whiskey & Co., "One Man (Too Many)"
- Leadbelly, "Goodnight Irene"

Mike Frame

1. John Fogerty, "Gunslinger"
2. John Fogerty, "Take It No More"
3. John Fogerty, "Long Shot"
4. John Fogerty, "Creedence Song"
5. John Fogerty, *Revival* CD

Miss Namella J. Kim

1. The Cult at the Wiltern—they still got it. Okay, Billy Duffy still has it.
2. *Wonderful Tonight* by Patti Boyd—"Layla" tells all. A must read for all rock'n'roll girls.
3. Noble Fir Christmas trees
4. Salvador Dali exhibit at LACMA—go see the films associated with the show.
5. Murakami show at the Geffen MOCA—"This guy did some heavy raving back in the days..."

Mr. Z

Top 5 Albums in Constant Rotation

1. Streetlight Manifesto, *Somewhere in the Between*
2. The Lillingtons, *Technically Unsound*
3. Manu Chau, *La Radiolina*
4. Japanther, *Scuffed up My Huffy*
5. IntroSpect, *Realpolitik*

Naked Rob (KSCU 103.3FM)

1. Frightener, *Guillotine* CD
2. Squalora, *Squalora* CD
3. Black Eyes & Neckties, *Apparition* CD
4. Skullflower, *Illrd Gatekeeper* (re-issue) CD
5. The Busy Signals, *The Busy Signals* CD

Nardwuar The Human Serviette

1. The Sonics playing Psycho at Cavestomp 2007 (<http://youtube.com/watch?v=dgs61lyrd2E>)
2. *Riot on Sunset Strip* by Dominic Prior (book)
3. *All Your Ears Can Hear* Book and Double CD (Amazing comp of Victoria BC Punk Rock 1978-1984)
4. The Plimptons, *Pomp* CD
5. Canned Hamm featuring Neil Hamburger *Christmas Office Party*

Rhythm Chicken

Top 5 Beverages for the Last Two Months

5. Old Milwaukee
4. Blatz
3. Hamm's
2. Grain Belt
1. Schmidt

Sean Koepenick

Bands That Need to Make a New Record in 2008

1. Gang Green
2. Naked Raygun
3. Moving Targets
4. Circle Jerks
5. The Damned

Steve Larder

Top Five Bands at the Moment

1. Ulver
2. Nortt
3. Look Back And Laugh
4. Neurosis
5. Yann Tiersen

Todd Taylor

- Off With Their Heads, *All Things Move toward Their End* LP
- Ringers, *Detention Halls* LP
- Chinese Telephones, Self-titled LP
- Carbonas, Self-titled LP
- Fucked Up, *Year of the Pig 12"*EP

Ty Stranglehold

Top Five Christmas Punk Songs

1. TVTV\$, "Daddy Drank the Christmas Money Again"
2. Showcase Showdown, "Merry Christmas, I Fucked Your Snowman"
3. The Yobs, "C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S"
4. The Vandals, "Oi to the World"
5. Sloppy Seconds, "Lonely Christmas"



Hey! Person putting your reviewable in the mail: full album art is required for review. Pre-releases go into the trash.

RECORD REVIEWS



If this were a cereal, it'd be Total Punk Anarchy Hobo Ohs. Yikes.

Maddy Tight Pants

¡APESHIT!/TIGERSHARK: Split: 7"

¡Apeshit! play chaotic hardcore with headbanging breakdowns. The last time I hung out with these guys, the drummer pushed a bunch of people onto a bed, then started sniffing the walls, pretending they were cocaine. My pants still smell like the fire that got started in the backyard that night. Tigershark play complex, pounding metalcore. Their drummer, Jon "Jonny Z" Zanin was a great friend to many people, myself included, and we were all heartbroken when he died back in May. RIP Jonny Z, this dope record will help your memory live on, even though it doesn't need any help. —CT Terry (Molsook)

AGGRAVATION, THE: Self-titled: CD

If you think eighth-note bass rhythms and an occasional minor chord = The Wipers, then, whoopee ding, I present unto you the French Wipers. Me, I'm more inclined to say Les Marked Men at present, although I suppose the smart money makes some kind of reference to the Clorox Girls ((who are already too French by proxy for their own good)) at this point. Actually, now that I'm actually reading the lyrics, I think I'll change my order to be a French Wipers who really sound more like the Marked Men or Clorox Girls and learned everything there is to know about lyrical structure from the first Discharge album. Par example: "People says I'm greedy / People says I'm greedy / but I have my friend / my German friend / now I'm happy / I can travel / now I will travel for free / now I'm in my train / yes I'm in my train / I'm gonna see Poland / I'm gonna see Poland." That is the lyrical entirety of the first song. Somebody call up Greg Sage and get his sign-off on this, won't you? BEST SONG: "Violence" BEST SONG TITLE: "No Girls" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Came with a Biographie! —Rev. Nørb (Lollipop)

AKUTARE: Riot City: 7"

I heard a buzz about this band from Tokyo on a message board. Live they are supposed to be amazing. From what I hear, I can believe that it would be a great band to see in a live setting. This band is, undeniably, a guitar-heavy band with a ton of blues licks: three guys banging out the dirty punk'n'roll with a heavy Motörhead vibe. They also add elements of Japcore—reminding me a bit like countrymen Testu Arrey—giving it a punk edge. The singer reminded me of a cross between the latter mentioned

band and the transplanted band from Japan, Peeland Z; a gruff voice but definitely having a good time belting out the lyrics. Even though the band sounds loose, they play with controlled precision to perfect the intended sound without falling apart. Worthy of a few shots of whiskey and a packed club of energized fans getting rocked out. Now I need some cash to get to Japan so I can see it for myself. —Donofthead (Schizophrenic)

AMERICAN STEEL:

Destroy Their Future: CD

I never really listened to this band the first time around. I see that they had a run of a few years where they had released three LPs, toured extensively, and disbanded in 2002. So they resurface and bam! Here's the reformed band and a new record. So this is new territory for me. Right off the bat what comes to my mind is that they remind me of an Irish-influenced version of Against Me! meets One Man Army. But the second track, "Dead & Gone" goes into a different direction. It had a mixture of the Cure meets early Goo Goo Dolls before they went major. My favorite track, right off the bat. But this band gets hard to pigeonhole as you continue listening. They bring a lot of elements to the table. The song structures are multi-layered and yet still calculated. Not one song seems to be from the same camp, which keeps things interesting. This release is a pleasant surprise to my ears, indeed. I was so ready to dismiss this. —Donofthead (Fat)

ANGEL EYES: And for a Roof a Sky Full of Stars: CDEP

Dense, brooding, scary music from this Chicago band. There are only two

songs, but they total twenty-seven minutes. Dark, moody, and, overall, pretty cool. The band's website is vanfuckingcleef.com. I guess they are way more into Ennio Morricone than I am! Warning: don't put this on late at night if you are home alone. You could get scared. —Sean Koeppenick (Underground Communique)

ANOTHER ONE DEAD:

Come What May: CD

It's getting harder and harder these days to differentiate between what people call hardcore and metal these days. Also, hardcore has spread across the world. Bands all over the world play this style, making it hard—at times—to know what country a band might originate from. Case in point: this band from Finland sounds like a band from the East Coast from the '90s: the heavy, metallic bar chords, vocals that are shouted with a grunting tone, and the youth crew background vocals. First thing I thought was Strife meets Sick Of It All. A powerful slap in the face is the first impression I get. The band has a command of their instruments and execute with controlled power. A little bro-ish at times, but I can't deny my love for bands that are metallic. —Donofthead (Hell's Tone)

ARMED SUSPECTS: Time Will Tell: CD

Blending hardcore and street punk with songs about the usual heartache of being a low-life. This isn't horrible, but it doesn't really have much originality and the drummer misses a beat here and there. They thank the punks and skins, which takes me back to my early punk rock days, except in those days, a lot of the skins were stupid Nazi fucks in Georgia. In this day and

age of senseless war and consumer overdrive, these guys are still talking about the same unity. I agree, but the message comes off as defeatist and yesterday's skins are today's jarheads, which scares the shit out of me. P.S. Never write lyrics about Ben Sherman shirts and Fred Perry vests. It comes off like fashion punk bullshit. Read a book. —Buttertooth (Self-released)

ATOMS: Self-titled: 7" EP

Got a wee bit hopeful that this was a long lost single by old L.A. punk band The Atoms, but no. These San Diego kids dish up some punky new wave along the same lines as Servotron or the Epoxies. The tunes are short and sweet, with the rager "2029" leaving the most lasting impact. Good stuff. —Jimmy Alvarado (Sweet Tooth)

ATTACK FORMATION:

We Are Alive in Tune: CD

Oh, this is not for me. This is something that would be played in a gallery with video images of art mixed with livestock flickering on the walls, which would be covered in other art so that there's never a clear picture of what's actually happening. Way too much stimulation for this girl. I think this shit's what crazy (and not "whoah, you know that dude Barney with the hat? He's ca-ra-z-y." but "Hey maybe we shouldn't walk down this alley with that dude talking to his own feces." kind of crazy) sounds like. —Megan (Australian Cattle God, Attack Formation)

AUTOMATIC ERASERS, THE:

"Make It Right" b/w "On the Road": 7"

Super groups seldom live up to our expectations. GTR fell short (as did every one of my Max Bacon/Kevin Bacon jokes at the time). Likewise for ABJ (Jon Anderson, "Booger" from *Revenge of the Nerds*, and Davey Jones). Sadly, the Automatic Erasers debut single suffers the same fate. The songs are okay, especially the flipside which picks up the tempo, but nothing sticks once the needle's returned. I'd hoped for more given the band's credits—Ryan O'Sullivan (Tri-City Thundercats, Stamens) on bass, Ward Reeder (whose drumming with the Primate 5 is amazing) keeping time, and Orin Portnoy out front (he's new to me but he keeps good company). The good people at I Don't Feel A Thing usually lean toward humorous records. More of that would help here. —Mike Faloon (myspace.com/idontfeeling)

BACKSEAT VIRGINS: Born Again: CD

Mixed gender pop-punk revivalists with a nice smashy drum aesthetic, a rough-around-the-edges guitar sound, and harmonies quite evocative of those Joe Queer + female guest vocalist ((Lisa Marr, Kim Shattuck, et al)) Queers numbers. While it does amuse me that I can oft-times follow up a line to any song hereon with a line from a Queers song and have it fit perfectly ((count how many times you can work the line "I think I'd rather be at home, listening to the Ramones"

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The Alley Cats were true DIY: they did it all themselves. Onstage they were ferocious, off stage, they were quiet and unassuming—nice people, really talented, they lended amps, played benefits, showed up on time (which was an unheard-of concept back then!) and always on hand for some of the more uproarious gigs. At places like The Masque, the Whisky a Go Go, Hong Kong Cafe, Club 88, and many other shows at halls and parties. Sometimes overlooked in cut and dried historian's views of the LA scene, they were local legends... The Alley Cats were probably responsible for more hangovers and hearing damage than any other band on the scene...and when you play this disc, you will see why!

Pleasant Gehman, May 2007

Author of "The Underground Guide To Los Angeles" and "Princess Of Hollywood". Pleasant's articles on rock n roll, American Pop Culture, The Arts, and Human Interest stories have been published in The L.A. Weekly, The Village Voice, and The Los Angeles Reader



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into "You and Me." Scary, isn't it?), i can't say that's a particularly strong selling point. The band's definitely got enough burger in their buns to shoot for a stretch goal of being the American Yum Yums ((someday)), but, all the same, the next truly GREAT pop-punk band is gonna be the pop-punk band that manages to NOT remind me and everybody else of the '90s. Or so one would believe. BEST SONG: "Lucille," which is not the Little Richard song BEST SONG TITLE: "Lose That Dude" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: You can tell these guys are next-gen because they name drop not only the Ramones ((of course)) but the Groovie Ghoulies as well. —Rev. Norb (Insubordination)

BARSE: If You Can't Fuck 'Em, Cut 'Em Up: CD

These guys purport to be doling out "authentic sounding 77 Brit punk," but methinks they don't quite get it, especially lyrically. In the case of the latter, a recurring problem that pops up with many bands trying to do the whole "I'm a sexist pig" thang these days is that so few trying have the proper dose of sarcasm to pull it off and, in the end, sound like a buncha morons who make you wonder just how in the hell they manage to find girlfriends. A little dab o' intelligence in yer attempts at outrageousness will go miles, kids, and maybe it's just a language problem thing, but nary a whit of wit is in evidence here. The

nth-generation demo quality sound didn't help their case, either. —Jimmy Alvarado (Hell's Tone)

BLEACH BOYS: Puke Wave: 7" EP

Judging from the looks and sound of these guys, plus the location of the label, I think it's a safe bet this ain't the U.K. Bleach Boys, whose 1978 single "Chloroform" was such a swell bit of limey indie-punk. You get four tracks of punk-fueled surf instrumentals, including the obligatory cover of "Pipeline." Outside of leaving one to wonder why no one covers the Lively Ones' "Goofy Foot" just to change things up a bit, this wasn't bad at all. —Jimmy Alvarado (Rabid Dog)

BLIND SHAKE, THE: Carmel: CD

I guess I've been writing for *Razorcake* for a while now as I remember reviewing these guys' last album. So I went back and read my review of their previous release, *The Rizzograph*. Rock'n'roll, AmRep style. Rock and more rock and straight ahead aggro-rock. That's generally what I said about it. That seems to follow here as well, although much less AmRep style, more of the aggro-rock. For having a male singer, the vocals are incredibly high-pitched but not annoying. It just sounds like a girl is singing. There is a twinge of that DC sound, but there are still punk rock beats and attitude which causes this album to definitely fall into the post-punk category. All the songs are real short—nothing is over three

minutes—which makes for twelve songs in twenty-four minutes. There aren't any songs that really stick out here, but I do think it's better than the last album of theirs I reviewed. So at least they're improving, which is never a bad thing. —Kurt Morris (Learning Curve)

BLOTTO: Remember to Buy the Vinyl First... Singles Collection 2004–2007: CD

Blotto is my absolute favorite band from Japan. Hands down the tightest outfit going right now. Gritty pop punk with enough hooks and melodies to keep you listening through the entire twenty-one tracks here and stoked that they're still making music. There's also a great and really noticeable progression from start to finish. They start off strong in the 2004-era songs and end fucking amazing with the songs from 2007. They're so good that they break through my whole "I need to understand the lyrics so I can sing along despite the fact that everyone wishes I wouldn't" deal. Some of them are super slurred and some of them are just plain broken English, and I couldn't care less. This is a compilation of their singles and comp tracks, pretty much up to date if I'm not mistaken. It's got everything up to their split with Drunken Boat that actually just came out. There is literally no way you could go wrong here. CD version is out now on Snuffy Smiles out of Japan (which I always thought was

Snuffy Smile but everything I see now has the extra "s" at the end) and a vinyl version is coming out here in the states on A.D.D. Records. In closing, I'd like to wonder what the deal is with A.D.D.: the good label, and A.D.D.: the somewhat heinous street punk label, coexisting with the same name some how. Seems like the world is small enough that it would have come up before. —Stevy (Snuffy Smiles/A.D.D.)

BOMBS AND BEATING HEARTS: From Dumpsters Rise!: CD

Is this a parody CD? Sadly, I fear it is all too real. If punks keep writing lame songs about eating out of dumpsters, I'm going to have to start a band and write songs about eating food from a grocery store! What ever happened to writing songs about hanging out at Burger King (see: Ramones, Queers, et al)? This is crappy Crimethinc-influenced folk punk. I wonder if This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb (a great band) ever sit back and think, "What evil force have we unleashed in the world?" If this were a cereal, it'd be Total Punk Anarchy Hobo Ohs. Yikes. —Maddy (Self-released)

BORN/DEAD: The Final Collapse: LP

I stopped reviewing my personal purchases a long time ago. If I did, I would be writing every day for the rest of my life. I buy way too much for my own good. That also means that it takes me a long time in getting around to listening to new stuff. In the case of

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this release, I pre-ordered a cool half red, half white splattered copy of this record. Not sure how long I have had a copy of this, but I know I hadn't had a chance to listen to it. But it got pushed up the list real quick when there was a review copy in my box at HQ. Now I can nerd that copy and file it away and play the review copy. Glad that the circumstances worked the way it did. It's an amazing record from this Bay Area band that keeps getting better and better with each release. I have seen them a few times and truly enjoy their live set. They capture the power of their music and propel it when they play live. On this record, the new songs outshine what they have done previously, taking their anarcho punk sound and pushing it to a new level with an outstanding recording that is not overproduced. The sound strikes you with solid force and is well mixed, letting all participants to be heard equally. The dual vocal attack keeps things interesting while they let you know what they are thinking. Eight songs was a well chosen amount to release (which includes a Crass cover). Not too little and not too much without feeling needy or overwhelmed. These guys tour quite frequently, so if they come through your neck of the woods, you have to witness it for yourself. —Donofthedeath (Prank)

BUSY SIGNALS, THE: Self-titled: CD

It is a lazy man indeed who can think of no better band to compare the Busy Signals to than the Buzzcocks. Unable to think of any better band to

compare the Busy Signals to than the Buzzcocks, I thought I'd go the world one better: Procuring the services of a local stopwatch, I actually timed what portions of this record's efficient 23.5 minute duration actively reminded me of the Buzzcocks. The actual results were ten minutes, twelve seconds. Now, mind you, this is highly unscientific ((plus it's a pretty crappy stopwatch, I've had it since elementary school)); at times I would be frantically stopping and starting when vocals which didn't remind me of the Buzzcocks ((I'll tell you ONE god damn thing about it: Busy Signals vocalist Analucia doesn't sound much like Peter Shelley, and she SURE the hell doesn't look much like him!)) traded back and forth with guitar riffs that did, etc., and sometimes the band only reminded me of post-reunion Buzzcocks ((e.g., "Just 4 Show")), but, after crunching the numbers, it appears that this band sounds like the Buzzcocks something like 43.4 percent of the time, which is somewhere around the average field goal percentage of any given NBA team on any given night, which appears statistically significant to me, so it's settled: Buzzcocks indeed. If you're scoring at home, the bands that the Busy Signals reminded me of when they WEREN'T reminding me of the Buzzcocks were Heart Attack ((SPRING-WOUND, I tell you! SPRING-WOUND!)), the Epoxies, the Breakouts, the Epoxies again, Nikki & The Corvettes, and 20/20, in that order. Funny thing is that if you pop this disc into your computer

and load it into your iTunes®, then look at how the band name comes up, you can see that there has been a "tragic" error, and the band's name is actually misspelled "BUZY SIGNAL," not "BUSY SIGNALS." So, if you are playing thru your tune library with your music organized alphabetically by band name, what band's songs start playing when this record is over? You guessed it...Buzzcocks for the win. BEST SONG: "Look the Other Way" BEST SONG TITLE: "Ring Ring Ring" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Some fancy guitar company just came out with a replica of Pete Shelley's Starways™ guitar, and if you correctly guessed the retail price of the guitar, you could win one before it was actually released. Since you could guess three times from the same email address, I guessed 369 dollars, 369 pounds, and 369 Euros, in deference to the Buzzcocks song "369" off of "Trade Test Transmissions." If the price turns out to be "Sixteen Again," I'll surely be kicking myself... —Rev. Nörb (Dirtnap)

CANADIAN RIFLE: Self-titled: 7" EP

A bit of a surprise here, as nothing about the simple packaging or the lyrics hints at how fuggin' good this is. At turns deceptively intimate in sound and anthemic without going out of the way to sound as such, all four tracks on here are top notch—mid-tempo, gruff-yet-sung vocals and just stick with hooks, landing them somewhere in the gray area between

the Effigies and Naked Raygun. I can easily see these kids blowing up huge in short order. —Jimmy Alvarado (Criminal IQ)

CATERPILLAR TRACKS: Scrape the Summer: CDEP

This is the second band I've reviewed for this issue that has reminded me of the relatively little-known Haram. There are four tracks from this Cincinnati band that, like Haram, remind me of Drive Like Jehu meets Sonic Youth, with maybe some Mission Of Burma thrown in for good measure. Although it's tried to mask itself as having five songs, the last track is just noise and is a throwaway. Of what's left, it's not by any means horrible. It's intense, attacking rock and roll, reminiscent of what I might imagine DLJ would've sounded like if they had kept a harder edge instead of mellowing out a bit with Hot Snakes. There's some dynamic here, but the mood is pretty straight forward. Rock, rock, and more rock. It is what it is: a few songs that don't do much for me but are by no means horrible. —Kurt Morris (Phratry)

CHAZ: Self-titled: CD

Ack! My mind doth work in mysterious ways! When I saw this, I thought, "Holy shit! Chaz Matthews (Dimestore Haloes) has a new record!" Sadly, this turned out not to be the case, but I won't hold it against 'em. This band is a strange mix of power pop, Queen-esque high vocals



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(scary!), metal (yikes!), hardcore, and the occasional super cool back-up vocals on songs like "Poverty and Romance." I say: Make all your songs like "Poverty and Romance" and I'll like you very much! Make all your songs like "The Carrot of Power" (Queen meets hardcore) and I will hide under my bed! If this were a cereal, it would be mostly Corn Flakes with a handful of Trix (yum!) thrown in! Ah, potential! —Maddy (Self-released)

CHILDREN'S CRUSADE, THE: *Get Awesome: CD-R*

Portland's Children Crusade won't have to go on any sort of crusade to get people hooked on this instant classic tribute to '90s pop punk. Borrowing from the upper levels of the bygone pop punk golden era, The Children's Crusade deliver some of the best poppy punk recorded in recent years. The vocals are simultaneously snotty and scary, and the production gives the band an uncommonly full sound for a three-piece. Reminiscent of the old Mutant Pop band After School Special yet with a slightly rawer edge, The Children's Crusade stands out as one of the more exciting new bands I've heard lately. *Get Awesome* is available as a 10" record with this CD-R included. Warning: neck pain may result from the uncontrollable beat nodding known to ensue upon first listening to this awesomeness. —Art Ettinger (It's Alive)

CHINESE TELEPHONES / *DEAR LANDLORD: Split: 7"*

It's really no surprise that I like this so much. Dear Landlord is made up of members from Rivethead (who I exist on some days) and The Copyrights (who I've just been recently getting into, but really like what I've been hearing) and I have no chance of hiding my love of the Chinese Telephones. Take those bands, put them on Adam and Jenna's label (putting out considerably awesome stuff and are some of the nicest people in California), and I'm a fan before the first spin on the turntable. Oh, and they threw in a CD-R of it in case I feel like taking it on the road with me? Musically, Dear Landlord bring some of the best qualities of both Rivethead and Copyrights without sounding like a carbon copy of either. Chinese Telephones just seem to keep upping the ante (not that I think it was all that low to start with). Justin finds a way to take some pretty classic sounding melodies but keep them feeling fresh and new. Their second track actually has lyrics (a rarity for them), possibly because it's their (now) former bassist's song. —Megan (It's Alive/Recess)

CHINESE TELEPHONES: *Self-titled: CD*

How many times have I burned myself a CD of everything they've put out (yes, I ripped all the 7"s. No, I probably won't burn you a copy.) just to have something of substantial length to listen to. Thank you for finally releasing a full-length. I'm trying so hard to not let

them slip into a place where I take them for granted. There's this amazing band that makes you so ridiculously happy every time you get to see them. But, then you're close to them. You hear it more and more. You still love it, but it becomes a standard. And that's a pretty hard standard to maintain. Luckily for me, these guys keep making it sound more and more appealing. Even the rerecorded versions here of "I Think I Can Breathe Now" (which happens to be one of my favorite songs by anyone) and "This Time Next Year" top their earlier selves. The back-to-back tracks, "Back to You Again" and "Stay Around" destroy me with the sweetness of the melodies juxtaposed against the slightly sad lyrical content (I am the biggest sucker for that). I think their secret is in that it definitely has the catchiness of its pop foundation, but a no point does it feel like they're going to be completely pigeonholed by that, which does nothing but strengthen them. Extra bonus is that Jeff Burke (Marked Men and Potential Johns) provides both backing vocals and the use of one of his songs, "Crying in the Chapel," which flush out their sound quite nicely. Well worth the wait. Also on vinyl—there was clear, but that'll be long gone by the time this is printed. —Megan (It's Alive)

CHINESE TELEPHONES: *Self-titled: CD*

I think if the Marked Men had a touch more of a garage/power pop influence to them, they'd be the Chinese Telephones.

Having finally released a proper full length (and after asking about it in a previous review, I can quite safely assume 110 percent of the credit), it's some more of the familiar, fast, and catchy hits we already love, as well as some slower ones (which the asshole in me still likes, just not as MUCH as the faster/catchier ones, though that's gradually changing with every listen). Listening to this gives me the impression that these guys are the type of band that could play at a party in any little jerk-water burg, and instantly win over everyone in attendance, from the (literal) kids to the older, "been around" dudes. —Joe Evans III (It's Alive)

CLINT MAUL: *Ninguna Amplificación!: 7"*

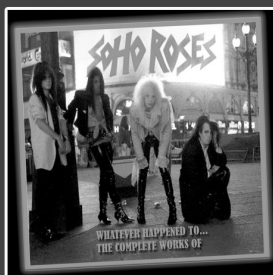
Clint Maul is the kind of country singer who might bristle at the title, for as Tom Russell said, "Don't call me no country singer, those are poison words these days." His voice might be seasoned by years of whiskey and cigarettes, or the same spent screaming in a punk band, or both. The two A-side songs on this 7" are slow, worn-out, sad country songs played on acoustic guitar and harmonica, with the B-side picking up the beat slightly and taking the sound a little further from southern soil. This ain't no alt.country or folk-punk, this is just *country*, the way it should be. —Sarah Shay (Toxic Pop)

COMADRE / TRAINWRECK: *Split: 2 x CDEP*

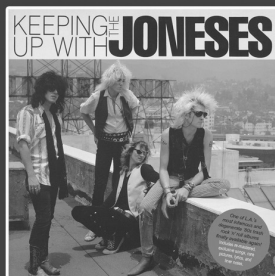
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in one cardboard case with a sleeve for each. California's Comadre throws in five songs (twelve minutes) of yelling, screaming hardcore punk, except for one track which is just guitar and the same yelling, screaming vocals. It doesn't quite sound right. The band rocks fairly well and also name drops Fugazi, Embrace, and Rights Of Spring in one song. They don't sound like any of them. I can imagine their live shows are really good, however, and probably involve a big community atmosphere. Trainwreck is from Germany and I really enjoyed their music. They play hardcore reminiscent of some of the mid-'90s metal-core material (e.g. Harvest) with vocals that are a dead-ringer for Strongarm. While they were slow in starting once the first song finally gets going, they don't stop. Some of their lyrics are in German but the majority are in English. They also included explanations for each of the songs, which I really appreciated. It seemed like we're going through some of the same things, so it made it all easier to relate to. There are four songs from them, clocking in at around fifteen minutes. The packaging looks great with nice photos. However, maybe it's just the environmentalist in me, or maybe it's the transient who only listens to digital music anymore, but I had mixed feelings on giving each band their own CD. Perhaps they saw themselves as two bands who were just putting their music in one package and, in one sense, that's definitely conserving things. But

wouldn't it have saved plastic and helped the environment a little to just put both bands on one CD? Yeah, the layout would've had to change but I'm sure it could've looked just as cool. Regardless, the music on here isn't too bad, especially from Trainwreck. —Kurt Morris (Bloodtown)

COPEATER / MURDER OF CROWS: Split 7"

Split vinyl offering from a bunch of dope-smoking braineaters from Madison, Wisconsin. I like how their label refers to both bands as "bong-ripping shred fiends." Murder Of Crows contribute one long, apocalyptic song, "Empty Battlefields," that comes across as a slightly crustier version of the Awakening's *The Final Feast 7"*. No lyrics for the Copeater side, but with titles like "Whale Riders" and "Space Dock"—c'mon, you know what *spacedocking* is, right?—I'm wondering how much we really need to know. They're plowing through four grindcore songs in about as many minutes, and it's some pretty thick stuff for a two-piece. If you're veering towards the darker end of the spectrum, try this one out. I'm more into Celtic flute-rock at this point in time, but the Jeff Gaither-esque cover and insert were pretty awesome. —Keith Rosson (Scenester Credentials)

CRIME: *Exalted Masters*: LP

Crime were pioneers in San Francisco—playing the lowest-fucking-fi rock'n'roll the West Coast ever heard;

a sound so sordid only the Electric Eels could compare. Crime were nefarious, witless bastards too, playing the infamous San Quentin prison in cop uniforms (Jesus!). Needless to say, these actions do not represent an algorithm for longevity, and, after only a handful of singles, Crime was dissolved. After their breakup in the early '80s, Crime's cult grew. Crime's influence on bands past and present is immeasurable—simply put, anyone name checking The Oblivians or the Wipers needs to go back to Crime for the source. *Exalted Masters* is the new LP by Crime. It's mainly a collection of unrecorded Crime songs from the late '70s, finally recorded in 2007. Unfortunately, I don't like it. Much of Crime's listening pleasure comes from the lo-fi recordings and undoubtedly acrimonious circumstances a band with no real antecedents—no tenuous links for people to contextualize this new sound—must have felt in 1976. *Exalted Masters* sounds good. Crime's earlier recordings don't. And for a band whose sound relied on hate—an almost Hugo Ball-like negation of the zeitgeist of the mid '70s—*Exalted Masters* sounds weak, polished, and unimportant—everything Crime wasn't in the late '70s. There is one redeeming quality to *Exalted Masters*. Vocalist Johnny Strike includes a passage from his upcoming book on this LP. I like it. The track has a Stan Ridgway-like feel to it, indebted to writers like Raymond Chandler and Jim Thompson. Unlike Crime's undoubtedly upcoming

records, I look forward to Strike's upcoming publication. —Ryan Leach (www.crimesf.com)

CRITICAL PICNIC: Self-titled: 7" EP

Ultra-trashy, spastic thrash stuff here with enough equal opportunity offensiveness going on in the lyrics—anti-women's lib, anti-handicapped and pro-littering tuneage, and a ditty sung from the perspective of a disgruntled pedophile, for starters—to get pretty much all sides of the map in an uproar. Brilliant in its gaffly simplicity. —Jimmy Alvarado (Smokin' Barrel)

CULTURE SHOCK: Self-titled: CD-R

Culture Shock was going to call itself The Beatles, but they found out that there had already been a well-known band by that name so they went with the name Culture Shock instead. Joking aside, this ultra fast political hardcore album is pleasantly vicious from start to finish. The lyrics are scathing, with clever song titles including "If Only an Atheist Could Pray for the Apocalypse." Tempos range from fast to faster, with only the occasional slow breakdowns thrown in here and there. It all amounts to a very respectable debut, suitable for play at any public formal function. —Art Ettinger (Self-released)

CUTE LEPERS, THE: "So Screwed Up" b/w "Cool City": 45

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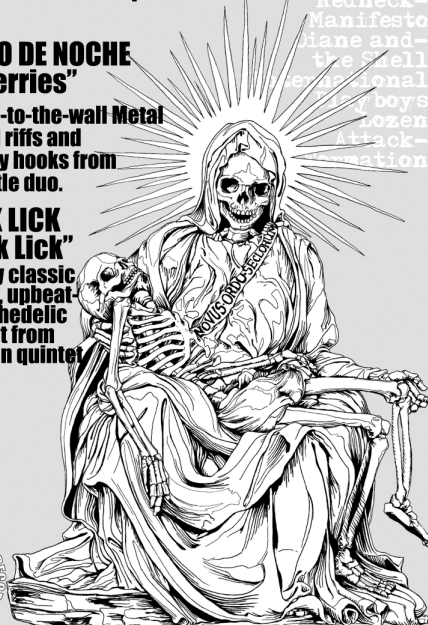
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stumble onto the Cute Lepers 45, and God is forgiven, because we are kind and merciful creatures. This Steve E. Nix-enhanced 45 is to the first Briefs' album what the Eddie & The Hot Rods' "Do Anything You Wanna Do" 45 was to the "Teenage Depression" album, if "Teenage Depression" was as good as that Briefs' album, which it isn't. Well, maybe it is, i've always liked that song "On The Run," and their Who cover was real good too. In any event, this record's only major flaw is that it is equipped with a small hole, therefore unable to be played on my jukebox. Play it at the wrong speed, however, and you notice the trick: "So Screwed Up" is secretly "Just What I Needed" by the Cars sped up ((and "Just What I Needed" is, in turn, secretly "Yummy Yummy Yummy" by the Ohio Express, both of which actually ARE on my jukebox)). "The girls and guys in bands all sleep late / the suits sit in traffic on the way to get paid." Hallelujah, bra. BEST SONG: "So Screwed Up" BEST SONG TITLE: "So Screwed Up" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Run off grooves state that "Lepers shouldn't shake too much." THE MYSTERY OF "SHAKING" CONTINUES!!! -Rev. Nørb (Drunk 'n' Roll)

CYNICS, THE: *Here We Are*: CD

There are two phases of Suck involved in getting older. The first phase of Suck involves the absence of youth. The second phase of Suck is not so much about the absence of youth, but the presence of OLD.

One senses, after listening to this record, that the presence of OLD is beginning to make itself known around Cynic-ly quarters. I hasten to add that no disrespect is meant by this; it is what it is. But, i mean, still, about a third of the record is ballads, or slow songs, or whatever the hell you wanna call those things that start with acoustic guitars, and, adding anguish to injury, the band somehow manages to cop the riff to the Beatles' icky "Here Comes the Sun" not once but TWICE in the course of a single album. Now, i do not denyeth The Cynics the right to be a kinder, more gentler freak-flag-flying nation; to do so would be the stance of a young and obstreperous whippersnapper, and my best whippersnapping days are long behind me. I'm just SAYIN', is all, that as far as Cynics albums go, this one is kinda "relaxed fit," if you know what i mean. For some reason, they also see fit to swipe the riff to "In My Mind's Eye" by the Small Faces and re-cast it as "The Ring;" what purpose this action serves other than giving rock nerds like myself something to yip about is quite unclear at presstime. That said, "Here We Are" contains my new ALL-TIME FAVORITE Cynics song ((edging "Blue Train Station" from the top slot it's occupied for the last two decades or so)), "The Warning," which sounds like the Monkees on steroids with Peter Zarella on harmonica, Keith Moon on drums, and a savage Joey Levine on vocals,

and would actually be the perfect song to play during a *Scooby-Doo* or *Josie & The Pussycats* chase scene, if either of those bands had Joey Levine on vocals and Keith Moon on drums, which i don't think they did. Well, actually, Josie & The Pussycats might have, i don't remember any more. Nice one-off soul number, and thanks for keepin' it real, yo. BEST SONG: "The Warning" BEST SONG TITLE: "Courtney." No, okay, just kidding, just kidding. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The core Cynics duo of Kastelic/Kostelich are joined by Piblatovic and Kaplanovich on this record; both Kasenetz and Katz remain AWOL. -Rev. Nørb (Get Hip)

DAILY VOID, THE: *Identification Code*: 5271-684346864436-4519: CD

Way smaller than the dudes who played linebacker in high school, I was the puppet getting slammed around in gym class. They couldn't wait for an excuse to tackle me on a thin mat. Dry hump assholes. So when wrestling was "taught" in gym class, I got obliterated. After a few slams down I couldn't walk without pain. After two weeks of toughing it out I went to the doctor, where x rays showed two broken vertebrae. I'm really fucking lucky actually. Doctor showed me the way to the body cast. The Daily Void made my vertebrae tingle. TDV are ¾ ex-members of The Functional Blackouts and give you all the best of what you would expect

from that—strange, powerful, moody noise punk. Highly recommended. Who the hell designed those wafer thin gym mats anyways? Idiotic. High school is enough waste of time as it is, you shouldn't have to get damaged on the outside too. -Speedway Randy (www.dead-beat-records.com)

DEAD KENNEDYS:

Milking the Sacred Cow: CD

EASY JOKE ALERT: This record could not be more aptly named. I hold in my hand the brand new "greatest hits" collection of the Dead Kennedys. True, the disc does a decent job of chronicling the music career of these miscreants, but was it truly necessary to do so? Any DK fan could point the ignorant music enthusiast to *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables* or *Give Me Convenience or Give Me Death* and produce similar results. The track listing for this is pretty much pulled from the two previously mentioned releases with one or two tracks from the others for good measure. It comes with two live tracks—"Soup Is Good Food" and "Jock-O-Rama"—the latter is filled with enough distortion that it's almost worthless. In fact, the whole thing is worthless. Anyone interested, seriously, *Fresh Fruit*, ten bucks, local record store. -Bryan Static (Cherry Red)

DEADLINE: 8/2/82: CDEP

Obscure DC band finally sees their recorded output hit CD. The band did feature Brendan Canty on drums,



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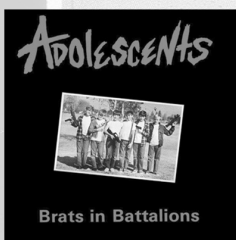
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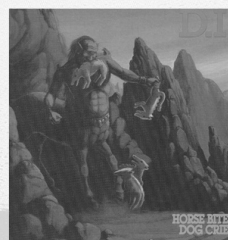


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however. Hard driving and relentless, this is the best ten minute hardcore release since the Fury record. —Sean Koepenick (Dischord)

DEREK LYN PLASTIC: Negative Feelings: 7"

I love Derek Lyn Plastic! Total new wave punk rock with awesome lyrics! Although the A side needed to be faster, the B side more than made up for it! There's even totally awesome girl vocals on one song by Naomi Lavender. Whoever she is, I NEED to hear more! So rough and rockin'! Buy this, dear consumers! If this were a cereal, it'd be Trix! So yummy! —Maddy (dereklynplastic@hotmail.com)

DICKIES: Dawn of the Dickies: CD

It's exceedingly hard to put into words just how fuggin' great the Dickies are when they're up to full snuff. Like the Ramones, when they've a full head of steam and a good idea, they're a force of nature more than a band; case in point their cover of the Moody Blues' "Nights in White Satin." They take a fairly pedestrian pop hit, its original version lackadaisical in delivery, and just tear into it, banging it against walls and just wringing it for every good thing it has until the song is wholly transformed and wholly their own. You'll find that cover here on this reissue of their second album (originally released nearly thirty years ago!), along with stellar originals like "Fan Mail," ("I'm Stuck in a Pagoda)

with Tricia Toyota," and "Manny Moe and Jack," as well as their take on the "Gigantor" theme. Although the length of time between their releases rivals the rock band Boston, when they do manage to crank a disc out, most times it's well worth the effort and this one is no exception. The punk gods indeed blessed the Dickies, and we all reap the benefits. —Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Oi)

DIE KREUZEN: Cows and Beer: 7"

This classic Midwestern hardcore 7" has been officially reissued on its twenty-fifth anniversary. And twenty-five years later it's still thrashing. There are a lot of bands right now reclaiming this early '80s style, but some things just can't be redone. If you're a fan of Sorry State Records, No Way Records, Grave Mistake Records, or even Fashionable Idiots, and have never heard these songs, I implore you to pick this up and check out why everyone's so proud of this whole hardcore thing. —Daryl (Barbarian)

DIGITAL LEATHER: Blow Machine: CD

Is it the shitty Reagan '80s and computer technology that made the synth music inhabit a melancholy electric space, or did the music make us feel that way? Digital Leather has been uncannily good in album after album, year after year. '80s-dramatic deep voice, moody keyboards at the club, dance and take drugs but don't feel better—I don't have old albums

like that, but I do have Digital Leather. Try this new one if you know his stuff or if you don't yet, it's great. —Speedway Randy (FDH)

DIGITAL LEATHER: Hard at Work: LP

Unfortunately, since body casts are made of fiberglass, you can actually walk around in them. So when I got it put on after breaking the vertebrae, I had to go back to my ninth grade classes. Other kids were pretty nice, actually, and only laughed after I was far away. Digital Leather gave me the same feeling inside. Can't really describe it, just stuck in a cast, walking around feeling weird and contained. Another great album from DL in his homemade mood synth world. Maybe his most vital album yet. —Speedway Randy (Tic Tac Totally)

DOA: The Black Spot—Unauthorized Bootleg Version: CD

Dunno what the second half of the title is referring to, but considering Joey's the one putting it out, I'm guessing it's some kinda piss-take or something. Feel kinda bad about the short shrift I gave this record back when it came out. When it hit the shelves back in 1995, I hadn't seen DOA in at least a decade, but I had heard from numerous people that they just weren't what they used to be, so when this band I was in (actually, by this time my position in the band had shifted from musician to sound guy/auxiliary guitarist-when-in-a-pinch) scored a show at a Tacoma AA clubhouse with what was

once one of my favorite bands, I was jazzed, but still not expecting much. They demonstrated themselves to righteous punker types when they lent our drummer a kick pedal to replace the one that had broken right as he was setting up (and anyone who's ever played a show can attest to how truly rare it is for a headlining band to do such a thing), allowing this humble touring band from East L.A. perplex Washington's punk population in attendance with our hybrid of punk and traditional Mexican music. When DOA hit the stage, though, I knew that everyone who'd said they had lost it were utterly fulla shit, 'cause they were easily better than the last time I'd seen 'em in 1986. They sounded just as inspiring, tight, and manic as ever, and newer songs, like their quasi-cover of David Peel's "Have a Marijuana," sounded more in step with their earlier stuff than that later rock-type stuff they ended up delving into for a short time. And yet, when I saw this on the racks later, I just couldn't bring myself to spend the cash on it. Why? I dunno, really. Chalk it up to their aforementioned "rock" period, blame it on terminal lameness on my part, but despite my experience, I totally figured it was gonna suck, so I dismissed it out of hand. That was ultimately my loss, 'cause while this ain't *Hardcore '81* or nothin', it is one of the more solid releases from their later period, which has been pretty hit-or-miss, frankly. Most of the songs are strong, catchy, edgy, and all that other good

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stuff one looks for in a DOA release, right down to the chainsaw used on "The Nutwrencher Suite." Thanks again, boys, for lending us that drum pedal to those eleven years ago, and thanks, Joey, for givin' me a second opportunity to appreciate this album. —Jimmy Alvarado (Sudden Death)

DOPAMINES, THE: Self-titled: CD-R EP
Six-song debut from this Cincinnati power trio: solid punk rock, vocals you can hear with actual melodies attached. This is a demo recorded in someone's basement. But it actually sounds pretty decent. These dudes are on the right road. Oddly though, one of the band member's last name is *not* Dopamine? Why? —Sean Koeppenick (Drastic)

DUKES OF HILLSBOROUGH / THE MERCURY LEAGUE: Abandon All Hope: Split 7"

The Mercury League: the post-Epiphany sound but played with youthful fervor instead of a desire to remain relevant fifteen years after the fact. The double wanking guitar attack may be brain numbing, but they're definitely played proficiently. And the fact that all four of the band members spend a good portion of their side of the 7" with singing time creates quite the wall of sound. Dukes of Hillsborough: the gruff, the hell-raising, the Dukes. Like a seedier, heavier Billy Reese Peters, they bring the rock but with a certain amount of grime and dirt that just smacks of Tampa Bay. —Daryl (Accident Prone)

ENDLESS MIKE AND THE BEAGLE CLUB: The Husky Tenor: CD

Interesting, apparently this band is comprised of ten-plus dudes, and yet they aren't a ska band. In fact, this is a whole bunch of folksy/country jams that range from light and sensitive, to pretty rockin', without just coming off as another Against Me! or Plan-It-X style rip off (as many other bands like this often do). This combined with the interesting packaging (which while I'm not positive, I suspect is the work of the label, who often pulls cool shit like this), I enjoy the bejesus out of this. —Joe Evans III (Crafty)

EVICION PARTY / LEPER: Split: Cassette

Eviction Party: I've reviewed a fair amount of tapes put out by Sharpie Fumes now and have started recognizing names of band members that continue to crop up in various releases. Thusly (and I've got no idea how accurate I am) Halifax strikes me as a fairly small but very tight-knit, active, and way fun scene. Eviction Party (and Sharpie Fumes as a whole) seems to reflect this perfectly: blank tapes with spray-painted stencils, Xeroxed covers, frequently dodgy recordings, and tons of passion. Vocally and lyrically, they're treading some heavy Crimphrine ground, while the clean guitar and strumming style almost brings to mind the Ne'er Do Wells or some other '60s-inspired jam—though that lack of distortion and oomph might just be a question

of gear or recording. Either way, it's decent, smart, and melancholic stuff—given a slightly brighter recording (though the levels on this one are generally pretty good), I'd probably be all over this band. Leper: Some fairly dark and political hardcore with strained vocals and spot-on lyrical content. Plenty of group vocals and the occasional odd, jazzy interlude—can't help but feel like I've heard stuff like this before (Forced March, maybe?) but also more than willing to admit that they're really good at it. I liked the menacing ska undertones that continued to pop up in "Creep Anthem." Definitely one of the more consistent Sharpie Fumes jobs, and if these aren't just a few bands that got together for a weekend and recorded some songs, I'd say we all might want to keep our eyes out for future releases. —Keith Rosson (Sharpie Fumes)

EXPLODING HEARTS, THE: Shattered: LP

Hopefully I'm not being presumptuous, but since you're reading *Razorcake* I'm assuming you know something about the Exploding Hearts tragedy (if not, check their website, www.explodinghearts.com, which is an informative tribute). Anyway, *Shattered* is an odds and sods collection of singles and alternate takes and mixes from *Guitar Romantic*. I'm typically weary of these collections (stuff left in the vaults is usually there for a reason),

but the Hearts were one of those bands whose outtakes were better than most groups' best tracks—a short-lived band whose limited output calls for a release of just about everything recorded—a lineage that includes the Young Marble Giants, LiLiput, etc. For rabid Exploding Hearts fans—a group that grows daily—this is a must. For those benighted to the Hearts and their '78 Mick Jones "Gates of the West" sound, start with *Guitar Romantic* then venture here. On a personal note, I'm glad to see that Dirtnap is releasing this record. Dirtnap, like *In The Red*, is a label whose existence is vital to up-and-coming bands—groups like the Exploding Hearts found a safe haven with Dirtnap's broadminded, eclectic palette. —Ryan Leach (Dirtnap)

FAILING MYSELF: Every Day: Cassette

Solo acoustic stuff on an unmarked, one-sided tape. The recording quality was a little shoddy, but it was sparse and fairly haunting stuff, somewhat reminiscent, I guess, of that Liza Kate song off the *Wayfarers All* LP. I was digging it, until I came across the last song, "The Jailbait That Stole His Heart," in which the dude waxes poetic in a first-person narrative about sawing a woman's head off. Next. —Keith Rosson (Rally Point)

FATALITY: Self-titled: 7"

Interesting release from this band from Nevada. At first, the guitar sound

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comes off a bit off kilter and twangy. But as time moves on, it actually benefits the sound of the music. It creates a foggy atmosphere. The band has a sound of old analog recording equipment and recorded live inside a garage. The songs swish along and then you are taken for a ride where they punch up the speed and thrash you along. Then they return to wash you over with a dissonant dirge of harsh drone while the singer/guitarist screams and yells with a pained delivery. As an introduction, I like what I hear. In a better studio setting with bigger production, this band should make a larger population take notice. —Donofthead (Spacement)

FEAR OF LIPSTICK: Indie Band: CDEP
About two minutes into "Bad Motel," as the song is going from the second chorus into the solo, there's a bit of guitar noodling that tugs the track in a different direction. It's not dissonant or off key (it reminds me of the Soft Boys, actually). It's unexpected and hard to categorize and I wish *Indie Band* had more moments like it. The rest of the disc, a decent blend of Green Day and the Clash (Billy Joe Strummer?), too goes where I expected it to. —Mike Faloon (It's Alive)

FEAR OF LIPSTICK: Indie Band: 7" EP
There is an axiom in rock'n'roll that says you can't really go too wrong buying a record with a black cover and pink lettering ((and i should know, because i just now made it up)), and,

in a general sense, that's true here; however, what i really can't get my brain around is how a band that writes such laughably shit-tacular lyrics like "your college boy brand of rock is doing mighty well for you and that's just fine / you're packing your shows, making more than a dime" could actually have the balls to include this line in their press writeup: "Pop punks (sic) songs absolutely need to have the hooks, but without quality lyrics and solid song structure they're just fodder for the bargain bins of tomorrow." I'm reading that, i'm like "Fuck YOU, ya little douches! Your lyrics are so bad i spent ten minutes trying to figure out if you were native English speakers, or from fuckin' Lithuania or some god damn thing! Who the hell are YOU to go off on 'quality song lyrics' this, and 'solid song structure' that?! YOU FUCKIN' DORKSWRITESONGSWITHTITLES LIKE 'CHERRY BOMB!!' HAVEN'T WE HAD A PERFECTLY GOOD SONG WITH THAT TITLE FOR LIKE OVER THIRTY YEARS NOW??? I HOPE JOAN JETT KICKS YOUR ASS WHILE LITA FORD EATS TIM HORTON'S STREUSEL CAKES OFF YOUR MOTHER'S BEST CHINA!!! AAAAAAGGGGGHHHHH!!!" Not a terribly bad record, really, but... i mean... holy crap, mon, get it together. BEST SONG: "What You Do" BEST SONG TITLE: "Cherry Bomb"...if you're the FUCKING RUNAWAYS!!! FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: I wrote the song "Motherfucker

Are You Ready To Rock?" in the front row of a Joan Jett concert. —Rev. Nørb (It's Alive)

FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE: Self-titled: CD
Yikes. Is this part of an official *Razorcake* campaign to send me total crap to drive me crazier than I already am?! Really, really bad political punk. Lyrics like: "Straight boys are taught to rape with their eyes." I only hope that they're all fourteen years old and will look back on this one day and get a good laugh. If this were a cereal, it'd be Cap'n Crunch (It hurts the roof of my mouth!). —Maddy (Sharpie Fumes)

FOR SCIENCE: Way Out of Control: CDEP
1) This is a serious contender for best EP of 2007. 2) Mikey Erg producing and on bass and Chris from Sinkhole on drums! 3) Has nothing to do with the last Clash album *Cut the Crap*, originally entitled *Out of Control*. WHAT MORE COULD YOU WANT?! —Bryan Static (It's Alive)

FORCED FAILURE: Self-titled: CD-R
When one thinks of Arcata (in Humboldt County), California, visions of hairy people, the pungent stench of patchouli, and blurry memories of quality buds come to mind, rather than punk rock. True, it was once home to Brew 'n' Beats, a fairly nice bar with a fairly eclectic booking policy, but the thought of a scene of thrash-happy kids taking root there was kinda remote, although

apparently that was an incorrect assumption. To wit: this disc, a demo from a bonafide hardcore punk band from Arcata, was passed on to my courtesy of East L.A. punk legend Morgan Hunt, who while living down here in the early '80s, did time as a writer for *Ink Disease* as well as putting out his own zine, *Multiplication of the Typical Joe*, and as singer/guitarist for the sorely missed A.D. Do. He seems to have kept up with his old days as a rambunctious punker and has now added drums to his repertoire of instruments played. True to form, this is steeped in enough '80s influence to look (check the Agression-esque skull skater on the cover) and sound (is that some early Die Kreuzen quirkiness I hear in there?) familiar, but not so much that it sounds like some fawning rehash circle jerk. The beats are kept mostly at a driving pace and the band smashes along with enough conviction to keep things interesting. In all, it's a fine debut and, hopefully, a good indicator of even finer things to come. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.myspace.com/forcedfailure)

FOUR STAR ALARM: Tilted b/w Cities in Dust: 7"
I couldn't figure out what was familiar about this at first. Was it Dag Nasty? Then after listening to it a bunch of times, I looked at the little info sheet, and realized the a-side was a Sugar cover (that song's going on a Sugar tribute, the other's just an extra b-side). So that's

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what I decided; this band sounds like Sugar and Dag Nasty. With a slight indie rock side to them. *Yes.* —Joe Evans III (Underground Communiqué)

FRANK TURNER:

Campfire Punkrock: CDEP

As a music critic, it is sometimes difficult to write an objective, concise, and articulate review about an album when all you want to say is "Ohmygodohmygodohmygod SO GOOD." I hope you all appreciate the effort, because that was my exact reaction to first hearing Frank Turner's *Campfire Punkrock*. Turner has taken a life of rock shows, touring, waking up in strange places, and (of course) loveless sex, and channeled it into an excellent folk record. He's a Woody Guthrie for the modern punk scene, with a voice like an earthier, British Jeff Magnum. He may be riding Billy Bragg's anti-folk wagon, but as he says in the excellent "Nashville Tennessee," "I try to make it sound my own." He succeeds. —Sarah Shay (Welcome Home)

FRIGITS: *The Guilt*: CDEP

(Note: The first two references in the upcoming review were in mind prior to the reviewer looking at the CD insert and seeing a) the Aaron Cometbus-style graphics and b) a band member named Paddy.) There are many places in this world in which people revere the early less-than-poppy East Bay/Lookout releases and, in forming their own bands, attempt to infuse such sounds with a

more contemporary Dillinger 4 style. It is within these circles that *The Guilt* will be very well received. They will love this scruffy, melodic post-hardcore with gruff vocals and goofy-on-the-outside-earnest-on-the-inside lyrics. Those of us who favor half or neither of those influences (I'll sign up for D4, pass on the inconsistent early East Bay/Lookout) will likely shrug with indifference. —Mike Faloon (Hide Away)

FULL OF FANCY:

Sweet Baby Jesus: CD

It's fitting that the cover art is full of gummy bears; at the core, this is super sugary, ultra fun, catchy pop. But then, there's a strange, distinctive aftertaste, that leaves you unsure of what it is, just that it's *GOOD*. In this case, it stems from a distinct mid-'90s alternative rock influence that becomes a little more noticeable with every listen. Think a stripped-down version of The Soviettes putting out a record on Sub Pop in its heyday. Think jelly beans dipped in fudge. Think one of the best first full lengths of the year. Think highly recommended. —Joe Evans III (Whoa Oh)

GET BACK UP:

Weathering the Storm: CD

The music is pretty heavy, but it's hard to get into the spirit of the music when the vocals are all but unintelligible. When even the backing vocals are incoherent, you've got problems. —Sean Koepenick (Organized Crime)

GET RAD / PROTESTANT: Split: 7"

Yikes. Why did I get this for review? Maybe it was the silly cartoon drawings on the cover! How deceptive! This is metal-ly, trashy hardcore with total dude vocals! In other words... argh! The closest I ever got to this brand of punk was when I lived with someone who liked Neurosis. Ack! If this were a cereal, it'd be Wheaties. Tough! —Maddy (Barbarian)

GOODNIGHT LOVING:

Crooked Lake: CD

Pretty capable country-fied pop music, reminiscent of something one might hear in a redneck bar. The singer said in an interview that the best way for the listener to approach the band is "probably getting stoned and listening to it by themselves." I've never been stoned and really don't want to, but if I would, I sure as hell wouldn't start with a band like this (Phil Collins, duh). —Kurt Morris (Dusty Medical)

GORDON GANO'S ARMY:

Self-titled: CD-R

The first time I remember wanting to go to a show was when Violent Femmes were playing at the University of Maine about an hour from my house. I was in fourth or fifth grade and my mom absolutely refused to let my brother and I go to a college without supervision and she wouldn't take us because she absolutely detested Gordon Gano's vocals. They were the only band banned from the car when she was

driving. After all those years of battles, I feel a kinship with Gordon Gano's Army. They sound nothing like the Femmes though. The guitar meanders between Dead Milkmen and some of the more typical Plan-it-x fare, which the vocals fit well with. The lyrics are sometimes nothing more than "Ba ba da da," which is actually a good thing to me. Overall, it comes together to feel like the perfect band to play to a living room full of dancing, smiling friends. One song took its lyrics from A. A. Milne (*Winnie-the-Pooh* and *When We Were Very Young* to name a couple), whom I adore. I can't think of an album more seemingly made simply for the purpose of winning me over. Originally recorded in one day in 2005, I'm so happy this was re-released so it could find a way into my heavy winter rotation to lift the winter blues. —Megan (At The Library)

HARAM: *Drescher*: CD

A melansquallic post-hardcore wall-of-sound concept record about the Super Mario-style rescue of "The Nanny" herself, Fran Drescher. Haram, from Virginia's D.C. suburbs, come with the tuneful, shouty vocals and Jehugazi guitar hooks that I'd want to listen to on one of those roadtrips where the drive is so fun that the destination winds up being boring. Eat at Anita's! —CT Terry (Lovitt)

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whoas in all the right places. —Jimmy Alvarado (Silly Girl)

HELL ON HEELS: *Dogs, Records & Wine: CD*

I'm not sure where Hell On Heels has been all my life, but wow, I'm sure glad this CD ended up in my review pile. This is the kind of album I would actually go out and purchase of my own accord. These ladies know how to write a great rock'n'roll song and, thankfully, they also kick ass when it comes to playing those rock'n'roll songs. The guitar and vocals are particular highlights, but I also love the fact that there's a keyboard player who knows how to add to the songs without once making me think of The Doors. Checking out the liner notes made me love them even more because, number one: these girls are seriously foxy, and number two: some of the proceeds from the album are going to the animal rights charity Last Chance For Animals. These ladies like their dogs just as much as their records and wine. —Jennifer Whiteford (Dionysus)

HELLHAAK: *Self-titled: CD-R*

Punk metal mix that is fairly entertaining. But all the vocals are in German. There is a U.S. translation in the booklet. But trying to follow along felt too much like homework. I got a brain freeze and gave up. Nice effort guys, but if The Scorpions learned to sing in English, maybe you should give it some thought. —Sean Koepenick (Self-released)

HOGAN BEACH: *Bleed Sadness: CD*

Ack. I just couldn't get into this. The vocals are pretty boring and slow and (and I know this makes me look like an idiot) the songs have too many words. Who thinks that punks have attention spans for this stuff? If this were a cereal, it'd be non-frosted Mini Wheats. Soggy! —Maddy (Self-released)

HOT TODDIES, THE: *Smell the Mitten: CD*

I recently quit eating sugar which is no fun at all, but it allows me to get through my days without headaches and dizziness. What, I wondered, will fill the sugary void? Enter The Hot Toddies. I love all-girl bands. I love harmonies. I love 1950's style drum beats and shoop-shoopy background vocals. And so it logically follows that I love The Hot Toddies. These girls play clever retro-pop with a punk sensibility. Their debut album is so sweet I almost don't crave ice cream anymore. And a lot of their songs are about sex, which cuts the cuteness in a very enticing way. There are also songs about nerdy things like HTML and photosynthesis, so frankly, I don't see how this could get much better. I even put the song "Motorscooter" on a mixed CD for my mom's kindergarten class to dance to. —Jennifer Whiteford (Asian Man)

i: *Get to Know Your Own Fluids: CD*

Some parts of this record are truly inventive, interesting, and on the verge of genius mind-blowing,

and some parts of the record just blow. I know that part of the reason for this is that I'm foisting low-fi rock'n'roll expectations on a record that is not intended to live up to such motivations, but if I'm bored or annoyed regardless of what I want a record to be, then in the end I've been bored and annoyed. But when this record works, it works well, especially the stuff on it that's heavily influenced by Middle Eastern sounds. Those songs captivated me, but when it gets away from that I got dulled out right quick. *Get to Know Your Own Fluids* does have sincerity and rock'n'roll desperation, but in the end it's one of those records that I wanted to like a whole lot more than I actually did. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Sling Slang)

IMPULSE, THE / BOY GIRL: *Split: 7"*

The Impulse: "Get Ready to Go!" is a great song from Dirt Bike Adam's new band. The cover art will hook the mod crowd—vivid colors and double-headed arrows zig-zagging this way and that—but rockers will be pleased too. We can all get along with the Impulse. Boy Girl: did I mention that Adam from Dirt Bike Annie has a new band? —Mike Faloon (the-impulse.com)

INFANTRY ROCKERS: *Boombala: CD*

Given the press sheet, I was totally expecting to be wowed by a mélange of reggae, cumbia, ragga, meringue, and some African riddims. Well, they got

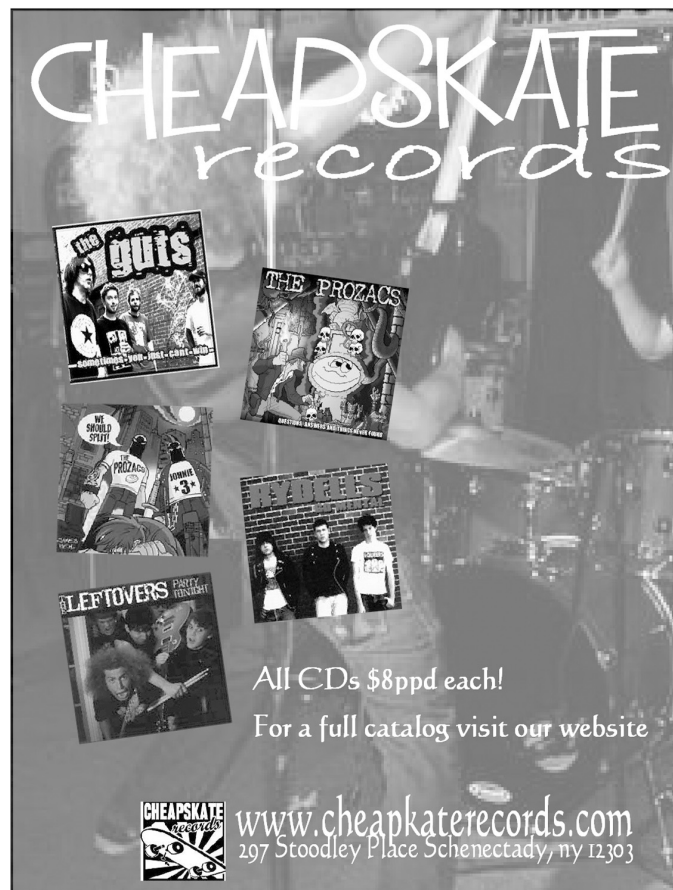
reggae and its myriad progeny up the wazoo, but the cumbia and such don't really make an overt appearance here. Don't get me wrong, this stuff is really good, and it especially sounds good at excessive volumes, but I was expecting a wee bit more of a mix of styles. —Jimmy Alvarado (Near and Far)

J CHURCH / SOUND ON SOUND: *Split: 7"*

J Church: Awesome. Awesome to the max. Their side has a cover of "Where Eagles Dare" with Ben Snakepit on vocals. Sound On Sound: This is the band's first release, and I must say I'm impressed. They aren't entirely dissimilar to J Church, but they seem to have a more, how you say, progressive sound to them. They do a cover of "Old Chunk of Coal." Also, and I cannot stress this enough, R.I.P. Lance Hahn. —Bryan Static (Underground Communique)

JEANIE & THE TITS: *Slut Fame: 7"*

In seventh grade we were dicking around in the schoolyard and playing soccer. Except we didn't have a ball so we were using a crumpled-up ball of paper. The bell rang and we had to get *one* more kick in. I went for the ball of paper. So did a girl. I hit the paper. She smashed my shin. Literally. I flipped over and fell down. Cracked my shin, broke my leg. She ran away to class and I hobbled in numbing pain to the nurse and into a cast for weeks. Like to think she grew



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later is tempered here by deep, almost operatic vocals and a grandeur that is more Wagner than Reznor. Laibach's stage persona and flirtation with totalitarian imagery (although they insisted they were neither fascists nor sympathetic to Nazi sensibilities) did manage to stir some controversy, but the singular quality of the music they created is something, indeed. Like contemporaries like Coil and Foetus, they manage to take disparate musical influences and create something that may indeed have a beat, ain't really gonna make you wanna dance, but is interesting enough (the key ingredient) to make you wanna really listen. That kinda musical subversion just doesn't happen often enough anymore. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.cherryred.co.uk)

LAMPS: Self-titled: CD

Another band here exploring the gray area between skronk, hardcore, and lo-fi trash rock. Though some of the tunes are quite interesting in their utter tunelessness (what can I say, sometimes I like noise), what's most impressive is the level of racket they manage to create—the guitars alone sound like two sheet metal airplanes colliding in mid-air. I like it lots, but I'm not betting on 'em getting much air on KROQ or Indie 103. —Jimmy Alvarado (In the Red)

LAST HOPE, THE: Violence, Vengeance and Retribution: CD

Their drummer is named Chippy; I

think that's the nicest thing I can say about this band. Chippy, that just sounds like a nice kind of guy you'd like to get to know better, you know? Maybe go out for an ice cream soda or swing by the local roller rink with. Just make sure he doesn't trick you into going to see this bullshit. Three guitars for pretty basic anthemic punk? What the hell for? —Megan (Self-released)

LEE MONSTER:

No World Order: 2 x CD-R

This looked like a handmade indie hip hop record at first, and while there's some rapping, it feels like more of an art project, with all sorts of different stuff, a decent bit instrumental, and some fairly political stuff, too. Pretty cool, though two CD's worth of stuff is a bit lengthy for me. —Joe Evans III (Self-released)

LEFTOVERS, THE: On the Move: CD

Yay! Yesterday's Kids-esque power pop recorded by Justin Perkins, of Yesterday's Kids fame! This is such a cool album! Great harmonies, power pop yumminess, and lyrics about girls! And it's firmly on the punk end of the power pop spectrum (and that's a good thing)! If this were a cereal, it'd be Cinnamon Toast Crunch! Seriously, it's just that good! —Maddy (Rally)

LEFTY LOOSIE:

100 Miles an Hour: CD

Yay! Milwaukee punks are go! Female-fronted punk rock, ideally

suited for the basement show! If you're ever in Milwaukee and you DON'T go see at least one band, you are an even bigger dork than me! If this were a cereal, it'd be Fruit Loops. Pop punk yumminess! —Maddy (Fast Crowd)

LEGION DCLXVI:

Black Goat Armageddon: LP

Do you know your roman numerals? Going by the title and if you actually had the release in front of you, you could highly guess what roman numeral number it may be. But that is a little deceiving also. Musically, two things pop to mind. Swedish d-beat/crust and the almighty Motörhead; adding those distinctive rock-meets-metal riffing with the energy of bands like Skitsystem and Wolfbrigade. A burly set of songs that show that this Canadian band has matured greatly from release to release. The production is superb with the sheer bombastic attack of sound. Vocals that are guttural but not cookie monster-like. Guitar sounds that are heavy and charging. Bass guitar sounds that are solid and punchy with a strong presence. Drum beats that keeps time and are bashed out with a fervor of rage. Lyrics that, in the past, were more in the satanic/death metal theme now are more thought provoking and better written. A band, I believe, that would sit in-between scenes. I think they need to get out and tour the states and Europe. With their output and

the maturity of having been together for sometime, many more would come to appreciate them. Musically, I think this band is as good or better than many that is being lauded today. —Donofthedeat (Schizophrenic)

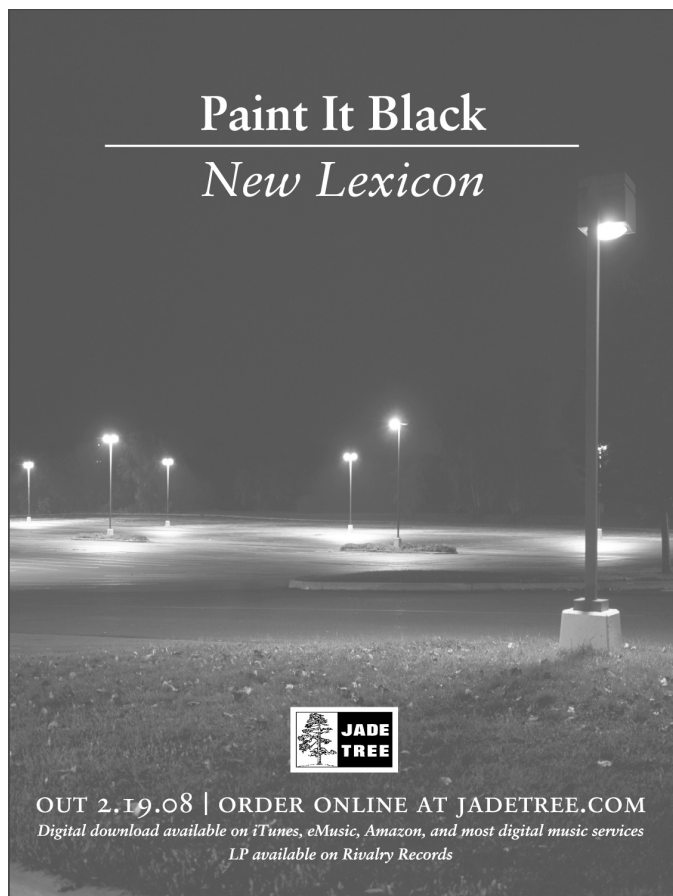
LIBBY LAVELLA:

Sometime in the Morning: CD


"Is this an album you're reviewing?" Lesley asked. She was all curled up under the covers of my bed while I sat at my desk, typing. It should have been the perfect set up to listen to Libby Lavella's album. Two sensitive ladies, hanging out inside, late in the afternoon on a cold, snowy Saturday. We should have been really into slow, female fronted, sentimental indie pop. Lesley poked her head out from the covers. "You know what it reminds me of? It reminds me of when I was dating that guy Chris Ikononopoulos and he sometimes got hired by the government to write background music for training videos. The instructions were always write something that sounds kind of boring." Enough said. —Jennifer Whiteford (www.libbylavella.com)

LOT LIZARDS: Leave Me Alone (I've Got a Bomb): 7"

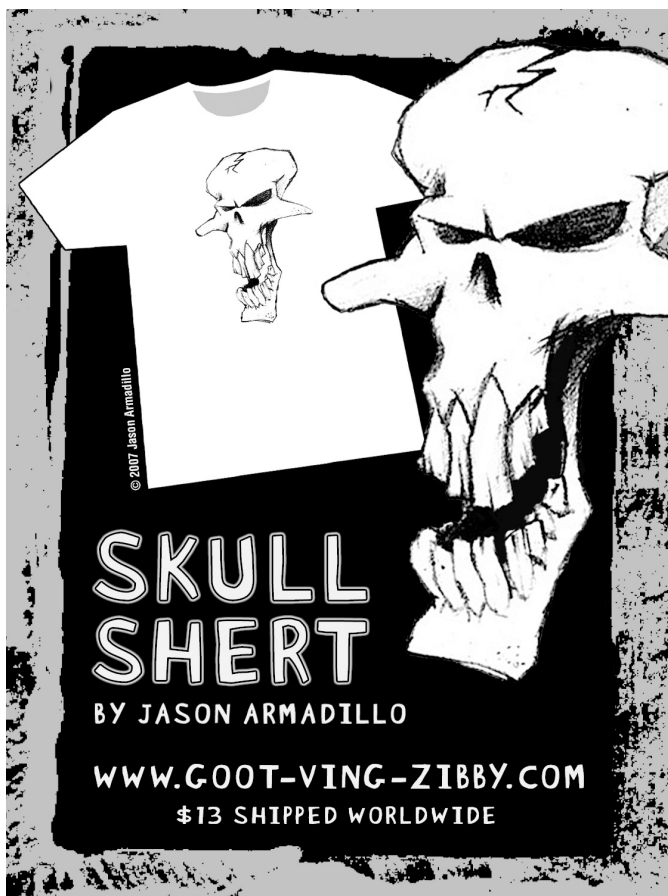
At one time the Lot Lizards had Lemmy Caution from Black Time in their ranks, and this three-song blast sounds like something he'd be involved in—sordid and lo-fi; lead singer GG Ciciolina's vocals sound like they were recorded in Hasil



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Adkins's chicken coop. Meg Slim provides *Psychocandy* thumb on this 7" that's indebted to the Stooges' *Funhouse* and Greg Cartwright's mid-'90s output. *Leave Me Alone (I've Got a Bomb)* is a refreshingly solid debut. —Ryan Leach (Perpetrator)

LOUIS TULLY:

I Was a Dog Once: 7" EP

I've never seen a 7" with a layout like this. Okay, close your eyes to visualize it. Well, maybe read it and then close your eyes. Think of the 7"s that have a full front cover that folds to the back, but then only goes up about half of the way in the back. Okay, now take that idea, turn it sideways. Now, slide the sheet so it's centered and there are two flaps coming in on either side. Got that? Okay, then in the exposed part, where you would see the record, they've slipped in a sheet of paper with more artwork. So, you've got the cover artwork (on green) with the both complementing and contrasting artwork of the interior artwork (on white). Sue me: totally get off on stuff like that. So, they've definitely got a concept going here with *Ghostbusters* being a huge influence (I'm saying three of the four songs, but I could be wrong and "Wet Brain" could make it a full four). They're dancey and fun (The drumset calls them the Louis Tully Party Program for good reason). And it may be schticky, but I like schtick every now and again. I've heard they did a 2-D show involving paper cutouts, but I did make it to their

3-D show (which is pictured on their second 7") where they handed out 3-D glasses to everyone in the audience. Fun, fun, fun. Oh, and fun trivia: they're not joking around with their love of the NES (the controller is in the artwork): their keyboardist has beaten *Super Mario*. Playing with his feet. Drinking beer. Seriously. That shit's on YouTube. —Megan (Repulsion)

LOUIS TULLY: 7" EP

I don't know what kind of crack these guys pump their keyboardist full of ((if crack is indeed a pumpable item)), but he starts out sounding like a church organist on crack ((not to mention possessed by high Naz Nomad & The Nightmares-ism)) on "What a Horrible Night For a Curse," quickly shifts gears to "dude from Styx on crack" mode in "Werewolf Lincoln," switches to comparably less uncommon "dude who really wants to play stuff like Genesis or something, but winds up falling in with a punk band playing at seven times the speed 'cause he's weird, not to mention on crack" mode in "Zodiac," but then in "Society's Been Canceled" he really doesn't sound like he's on crack at all, only, like, Red Bull® or something. Well, crack is kinda pricey i guess. Meanwhile, the band blazes on, yelling about curses and werewolves and shit, but you probably gathered that from the song titles. Although this quintet hails from my home state of Wisconsin, i can best describe them in terms of two Pacific

Northwest bands, as they sound like what i imagine the Minds would sound like were the Minds possessed by the aesthetic desires of the Dead Vampires. Fuck you, Seattle, we took your baseball team! When Portland has something we want we'll take that too. BEST SONG: "Society's Been Canceled" BEST SONG TITLE: "What a Horrible Night For a Curse" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: The front cover depicts the band in matching pairs of 3D glasses; however, count the number of lenses and you'll find that the blue lenses outnumber the red lenses five to four. Ha, Wisconsin is a blue state, but not by much. —Rev. Nørp (Repulsion)

LURKERS: Fullham Fallout: CD

One has to hope that the Lurkers have an exalted place in punk heaven waiting for 'em, 'cause lord knows they haven't gotten their well-deserved due here. Part of the U.K.'s initial wave of punk, they specialized in a blissful mutation of pub rock's stripped-down aesthetic and the Ramones speedy buzzsaw-guitar attack, and this reissue of their debut album shows just how truly good they were. Adding eleven assorted singles and demo cuts to the original album's already generous fourteen tracks, you get in one fell swoop a good chunk of the band's prime output, including "Ain't Got a Clue," "Total War," and two versions of "Shadow," the latter of which was resurrected nearly two decades later by the Rip Offs on *their*

debut album. If you like your early punk lean 'n' mean, it rarely gets better than this. —Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Oi)

MALADIES: Self-titled: CD

When I heard the first verse in "Donna Said"—"*Big house party in the Hollywood Hills...Red Hot (Chili Peppers on the stereo)*"—I reached for the eject button. It conjured images of Don Henley partying with Flea, lines of coke, and bubblebrained conversations about how Thoreau speaks to them. But then the Maladies uncork this catchy chorus that tips its cap to the Kinks ("*D-O-N-N-A/Sounds like L-O-L-A/Ray Davies sang about it but I must tell my story*"). Two songs into the disc it's a draw—the repulsive kept in check by the potentially appealing. Singer Erik Gillberg's clever vocal lines are outweighed by the brass ring feel that permeates the disc—the party guy lyrics, the slicker-than-catshit-on-linoleum production (thanks for the phrase, dad)—it's like being around those people at a party who look past you because they're scanning the room for someone cooler. Let's move on. —Mike Faloon (Darkjoy)

MATTY POP CHART:

Everyone Does Everything: CD

Yay! Matty Pop Chart plays more silly dorky songs! He does occasionally go too far into the earnest/cheezy end of things, but never too far (unlike other similar bands). So, while you

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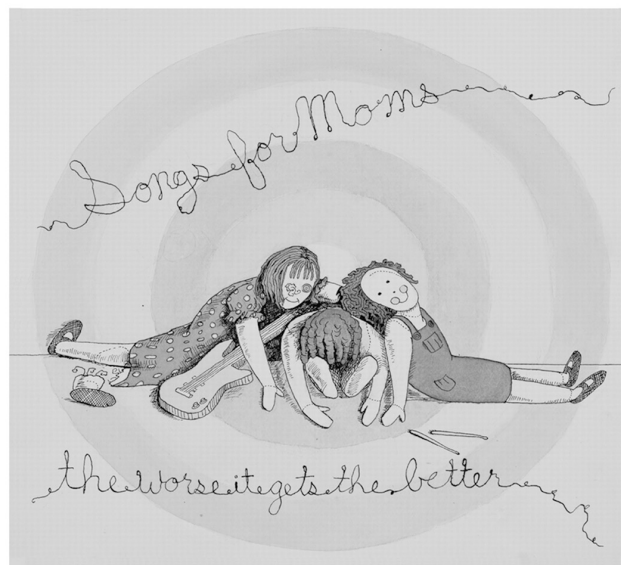
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might wince once or twice, it's GOOD wincing, got it? If this were a cereal, it'd be Rice Krispie Treats. Sure, there are some pieces that are broken and more like regular Rice Krispies, but most of it is congealed sugary goodness! —Maddy (Plan-it X)

MEASURE [SA], THE: Historical Fiction: CD

This rules! Think a (lyrically) depressed Discount with male and female vocals. Catchy mid-tempo punk rock that appears ideally suited for your local basement! Unlike most of what I get for review, I'll actually listen to this again! If this were a cereal, it'd be Golden Grahams. There have been times in my life when I've forgotten about Golden Grahams/Discount, but then I always kick myself and prepare the cereal bowl in anticipation of my forgotten treat! To re-commence speaking English: This is awesome and you need to buy it! —Maddy (Team Science)

MYSTECHE: Escape from Planet Love: CD

Glimpsing at the cover art, a fella might reasonably hope for the contents within to contain some modestly unexpected merger of the Minds, Lords of Acid, and Manplanet ((to say nothing of mid-80's Aussie college rockers Painters & Dockers, whose 1985 *Love Planet* album was far superior both musically and graphically)). Unfortunately, the contents contain nothing of the sort,

instead subjecting me to a substantial barrage of white dork funk/hip-hop with "wacky" lyrics, albeit a well-played and recorded version of same. Never cared much for funk, Zappa, nor Ween, thus i would feel few pangs of remorse were i to re-gift this item to someone who might actually enjoy it, like Jenny Jones. BEST SONG: These guys don't seem like bad folks, but there is honestly not one song on this disc i like at all. BEST SONG TITLE: "Quasimojo" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Not only is "Orgasmatron" not the Motörhead song of the same name, but "Astroglide" is not the Mocean Worker song of the same name, either. You fuckers didn't think i knew Mocean Worker, did you? No. No you did not. Ha. I'm down. I'm so down. Ha. —Rev. Nørb (Omega Point)

NANCY: The Fear of Missing Out: CD
Unless you have a strong desire to listen to standard pop punk/whatever it's called nowadays, you don't need to fear missing out on anything. —Kurt Morris (Sex Cells)

NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR: Self-titled: CD

Metallic crust from Denmark who used to be former tenants of the forcibly evicted squat Ungdonshuset in Copenhagen. In dark times, music to feed the anger and depression is a necessity. Images of a bleak apocalypse are portrayed in the artwork and are the mood set by the

music. Guttural vocals play against the thrashing tones of the bottom-heavy riffs. The delivery of the music is direct and played with conviction. Taking the architecture created by Discharge and adding elements of bands like Doom, Bolt Thrower, and Extreme Noise Terror, the band delivers a sound of dirty aggression. Comparisons can also be made to modern bands like Hellshock and Sanctum, who are also torch bearers of the latest wave of crust. I hope there is a tour in the works to come to the states. I definitely want to witness this band's music live. —Donofthead (Fight For Your Mind)

OFF WITH THEIR HEADS:

All Things Move Toward Their End: CD
I'm going to try get this out of the way first because I tend to drone on and on about some esoteric and self-indulgent bullshit before getting to what the record/band actually sounds like. Which is usually why people read reviews in the first place. Not that I give a shit, but I thought I'd shake it up a bit. If you have depression and anxiety issues, and not in the "aren't I so deep and introspective" way but in the "There are several times a year, if not every day, that I truly wish I was dead" way, Ryan Young has written a prodigious amount of lyrics dealing with the subject that you may appreciate. I have a fair amount of said issues myself and I usually don't like to surround myself with music that deals with them. Being depressed

usually isn't helped by listening to downer music. I can relate but I also want to see a light somewhere or at the very least get up and get moving. I can't think of another band that combines lyrics as truly emotionally dark with music that actually makes you want to get up and jump up and down. All this without eyeliner or a stitch of clothing from Dogpile. It's comforting to know that there are other people out there dealing with the same shit but still raising themselves up to get through it and try to have a good time when they can. This record is a compilation of *most* of their songs from their beginning to somewhere in early 2007 or late 2006 and you know what? I'm glad I didn't put this record out. It would annoy the piss out of me to put out a compilation that is supposed to be all-inclusive of their singles and what not up until early this year and have it not be all-inclusive! They've left out their first 7" from what I have dubbed "The Murder City Years" called *Fine Tuning the Bender*. Which is a mystery to me because it's not bad or all that different from the *To Hell With This... 7"*, which they did include. "What the fuck?!" I say. At any rate, this thing is laid out in pretty much reverse release order, as far as I can tell. Starting with their split with J Church and working backwards. The material goes essentially from great to not too shabby at all. There's also a previously unreleased song called "Sadie" from a few years back that I really didn't like at first but actually

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grew on me. Believe it or not, but these assholes already have enough material for another compilation like this (and, as of this writing, it isn't even the end of 2007) and they've got a brand new full length coming out next year on No Idea. Hardest working bum outs in the industry!... and probably one of the best U.S. bands of the last few years. —Stevo (No Idea)

OSMANTIKOS:

Keep Fighting Oppressive Conditions: 7" Malaysian punks who probably deserve to have their patches on crust punk buttflaps all over this country. Take note: fans of Havoc Records or *Urban Guerilla Zine* would probably eat this shit up. They're lyrically utilizing some fairly spotty English—is it ethnocentric of me to even consider suggesting bands sing in their native language, maybe with English translations?—but they include some really heartfelt, sincere, DIY-lovin' song explanations, which makes up for it. As far as the music, I was going to mention stuff like Discharge, Discharge, Disorder, etc. Or the relentlessness of that there kick drum, or the Swamp-Thing-getting-shivved-under-the-bed vocals, or maybe the really nice guitar work and pick slides on "Backway System." I was going to. Instead, I'll just mention that the three weird aliens/rats on the cover that apparently constitute likenesses of the band members are wearing Makiladoras, From Ashes Rise, and

Extinction Of Mankind T-shirts, respectively. That should give you an idea. —Keith Rosson (Bacon Towne)

OUT WITH A BANG!: *Love My life: 7"*

I remember thinking Out With A Bang's *I'm Against It* EP was something pretty special. There was a certain amount of wit that made the trashy, crude punk rock stand out from every other dumb 7" on the planet. That wit seems to be missing from this 7", and I don't know if it's me or the record, but I do know that anti-PC songs are just as stupid as pro-PC songs, if not more stupid. You thought they were wasting your time; well thanks for wasting mine. —Daryl (Fashionable Idiots)

PATROL WAGON: *Self-titled: CD*

Why the hell haven't I made a trip to Carbondale yet? There seems to be a loose sound forming around the town, sort of a mixing of those associated with the almost ready to fall apart sound of Tucson, the fun and sloppiness of the Bay, and a not quite nasty dirtiness that I can't quite put my finger on that might just be all their own, if not shared with Asheville. Patrol Wagon (I'm not sure if they're from there, but it was recorded at Lost Cross) fits that, but there's a desperation that comes through in the speed and the vocals that sets them apart from just plain ol' fun (which there is absolutely nothing wrong with). Another sweet release from Let's Pretend. —Megan (Let's Pretend)

PINK REASON: *Throw It Away: 7"*

Either a Joy Division-y mood vibe with Lou Reed slide guitars (33 speed) or a higher pitched singing moody acoustic-y guitar lots of effects on the voices (45 speed). Pretty catchy and dreamerific either way. I honestly can't tell and Criminal IQ always has cool, freaky, unexplainable bands. By the end of their three songs I feel in the territory of the Residents. Did I mention keyboards? —Speedway Randy (Criminal IQ)

PLAGUE: *Thumper: CD*

Personally knew nothing about these guys prior to listening to this, which was bit surprising to me, considering how tuned into the hardcore thing I was when they were out raising a racket, and it's my loss. Formed out of the ashes of the Defnics (whose "51 percent" is a staple for the *Killed by Death* types), Plague meted out some crushing warp-speed thrash during their decade of activity. Mining the area between Negative Approach and early DRI, they managed a number of EPs and an album before calling it quits in 1992. The tracks from those releases are all here, giving a whole new crop of hardcore fans the opportunity to revel in their glory. —Jimmy Alvarado (Plague Music)

POISON CONTROL: *The Violent Years: 7"*

Guttural, fierce hardcore always has its place, but doesn't always leave its mark. The first three songs of this 7",

for example, are great hardcore songs, but don't really have any chance of staying in rotation of my listening. That's why it's all about the transition from the third to fourth—and final—song of this record. Halfway through the B-side, the music does a 180 and turns from an all-out attack of fist-pumping punk to a genuine introspective of someone who suffers from social anxiety, while maintaining the energy and fury of the first three songs but raising the intensity to an almost frightening level. One of the top 5 B-sides of 2007, and definitely one of the most intense songs as well. If you were at the Fest this year, that dude who sang those SSD songs with *Witches With Dicks* is the lead singer of this band. —Daryl (Deranged)


PRIMES: *Facades and Pink Forms: CD*

Apparently, all of the bike couriers in Ottawa are crazy about weird, electronic pop music. Me, I run at the very mention of electronic music, and if a band gets on stage with a computer instead of a drum kit, I'm totally out of there. I am not very progressive. However, if you, like the bike couriers, enjoy music with bleeps and beats and fuzzy, buried vocal tracks, then maybe you would like this album. —Jennifer Whiteford (Postfact)

PRIMES: *Facades and Pink Forms: CD*

Wild-sounding release from a Vancouver, B.C. duo. Front 242's sonics and Skinny Puppy's experimentalism are present, but it's

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not self-indulgent. "Weapons Tanks Fire" and "Consumer" brought some insistent rhythms that have yet to leave my cranium. If you're looking for synthpop that doesn't fit into any preset categories, *Facades* is it. This probably sounds fantastic driving on the Autobahn at 2 AM. —Sean Koenenick (Postfact)

PRIZZY PRIZZY PLEASE:
Self-titled: CD

So I'm driving around, reviewing the latest batch of stuff and I put this on. I'm hearing muscular punk/rock with enough quirk in it to make things interesting, right? But I keep fixating on the guitar player and thinking, "Wow, this dude plays really weird. He's really happy with the harmonics and it sounds like he bangs, rather than strums the strings." I get to where I'm going and take a look to see who this unique guitarist is. Turns out that, outside of a lead in one tune, there is no guitar player. All that noodly, distorted racket was being laid down by a keyboard player. Of course, that ratcheted up the "cool" factor by at least twenty points. —Jimmy Alvarado (Let's Pretend)

PROTOCOL, THE: Recess: CD

Please note: In your bio, you can't just make statements like, "Jeff Reitan is recognized as one of the best guitar players around..." What? By whom? You might as well say that your band is the best band in the area. Argh, bio writers...if there's one thing that can

annoy me more than bad music it's shitty writing. Unfortunately, in this case, the music isn't much to write about either. I feel like I'm back in high school when I was subjected to horribly generic Christian pop rock. This includes cheesy lyrics, simplistic structures, generic vocals, and the occasionally stereotypical guitar solo. I didn't like it then and ten years later I still don't. —Kurt Morris (Parlor)

PUBES, THE: Peat Sounds: CD

Ack! This band is toying with my emotions through the use of Snakepit-meets-Dr. Seuss cover art! I'm such a sucker for good cartoon-ey drawings that this band could play Jets to Brazil-esque crap, and I'd still think they're pretty good. Attention pop punk devotees: This was recorded at Sonic Iguana! To the uninitiated, this means that it's a.) pop punk, b.) guitar-happy, and c.) good! The music is your standard pop punk, but the lyrics? There's the song "Squirrel Fight Pt 1" ("They go at it every night/Come on buddy, don't be lame/Pay your dollar, state your name/I promise you'll be glad you came/Get geared up for the big squirrel fight!") and the song "Oven Burn," which repeats the line "Jackie Joyner Kersey" over and over! Shameless copying of Ben Snakepit's comic style? Songs about female athletes? If this were a cereal, it'd be those colored Rice Krispies that don't exist anymore. Rice Krispies=standard fare, but different colors=silliness. I am dumb! —Maddy (Roadhouse Tunes)

PUNKINPIE:

Broketruckgoodluckson: CD

One time I had a plastic jug fall out of my car and get water all over the inside. Pissed, I kicked the gallon jug, thinking it was just water inside. But I forgot it was actually frozen solid from the night before. Cracked my toe right open. Had to get toe surgery. When I looked at Punkinpie's name and emo-ish cover, I wanted to kick it hard. But it's actually pretty good poppy girl-guy singing punk in the vein of The Lids. More fun than surgery. —Speedway Randy (Plan-It-X)

PURPOSE: 1994-2001: CD

I did a little research to find out this band was a NJ-based melodic emo-hardcore band that existed during between 1994-2001. They totaled ten members, one of who was Bill Henderson, ex-Thursday. The tracks are a twenty-seven song discography that spans the band's existence. This is good emotionally charged hardcore with the tough guitars and vocals of Youth Of Today and Gorilla Biscuits, not the whine of most of today's emo copycats. Oh yeah, they do a Rites Of Spring cover as well! The lyrics are mostly centered on fighting back against today's corporate-driven, consumer-based system. Fucking a right! —Buttertooth (Black Numbers)

RANDUMBS, THE:

It's About Time...Again: LP


For some reason, I thought this was a pop punk band because the name

sounded familiar. Then I looked at the cover, and thought this was going to be some Crass-but-not-quite style band. Then I listened to it, and it kinda sounded like Against All Authority without the horns, and little edgier/gruffer. Let's leave it as I was half right on both accounts. —Joe Evans III (More Smart Than You)

RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY: The Very Best of Red Lorry Yellow Lorry: CD

The late '80s was an odd time to be a college radio DJ; with scattered exceptions here and there (Lazy Cowgirls, Sloppy Seconds, Moral Crux if ya want three good bands from that era that didn't sound at all similar), punk rock was obviously no longer deserving of the missionary zeal we True Believers correctly heaped upon it in the late '70s and early '80s ((and incorrectly heaped upon it from '83 or '84 on out)). Hair metal bands of varying darknesses were still considered completely legit by almost everyone, would-be REM clones with pluggable-innate acoustic guitars ran roughshod over every state in the union, and the people who were supposed to be REALLY smart were beginning to invent grunge. Given the circumstances of rightfully mounting consumer ((that means me)) disconnection from the stinky carnival of LAME that late '80s punk had become, the times were such that folks such as I were inclined to listen to the radio shows of fellow DJs a bit more than normal decorum would suggest,

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just on the off chance that they actually sidestepped the whole mess and hit on something INTERESTING that my natural punk-o-centric tendencies might have otherwise caused me to overlook. Red Lorry Yellow Lorry were one of those bands that i was always glad to hear my fellow WGBW DJs play, because, although they weren't awful enough to make me turn off the radio, they also weren't good enough to make me think i was missing anything by not owning any of their records. Surprisingly, this dark and mildly tinny Limey collegio-goth hasn't actually aged that poorly over the last twenty-odd years, although i'll state up front that the brunt of this disc's appeal to me is pure nostalgia. Still, i could see popping this in after work some night when the only things to eat in the house are ramen and beer ((gets up to check cupboard and refrigerator)). Damn, you're in luck. I'll get the water boiling. BEST SONG: "Talk about the Weather" BEST SONG TITLE: "Monkeys on Juice" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: I said the band's name ten times fast just to see if it could be done. I respond in the affirmative. —Rev. Nörb (Cherry Red)

REJECTED: Fool for a Day—King for a Lifetime: CD

They guys are from Finland and their town sounds cold—Lappeenranta. But this release will leave you as warm as if you just drank hot cocoa with marshmallows. Competent

street punk with a bite. Imagine Dicky Barrett fronting The Business and you get the idea. "Four Shots" and "Intoxicated" should be blasting from boom boxes in Siberia right now, if there was any justice in this world. —Sean Koepenick (Hell's Tone)

RESISTORS:

Damaged Ugly & Loud: CD

A first effort from some dudes who have been around for a while. I mention that, because there are some elements of mid-'80s American hardcore (in the book sense of a definition), though this sounds a little slicker (not over-the-top by any means though, just as opposed to sounding like it was recorded on a boom box). I don't know if I could put this up there with classic stuff like the Zero Boys, but it ain't bad. —Joe Evans III (Self-released)

RESONARS, THE:

Nonetheless Blue: CD

Poppy, perfectly rendered garage rock from the brilliant mind of Matt Rendon (also a driving force behind the way fab, sadly departed Knockout Pills). He has an uncanny knack for nicking sixties stylings—Kinks, Dylan, Zombies, Rubber Soul Beatles—but his ear for melody and knack for arranging songs, along with hints of punk rock energy, raise *Nonetheless Blue* above mere mimicry. Plus, I hear a lot of Knockout Pills in these songs—the way the "band" (the Resonars are a

one-man combo) punches accents in unison, the sustained vowel sounds at the end of vocal lines. I'm drafting a research grant to fund a comparative analysis between the Resonars and the Knockout Pills. While that works its way through the proper channels (it would already be a done deal if the parties involved were Canadian), I'll leave you with this analogy—The Resonars: Knockout Pills:: Archie comics: E.C. Comics. —Mike Faloan (Get Hip)

REVISIONS, THE:

Revised Observations: CD

The Revisions seem to be drawing from the same jangly '60s pop well as The Shins, without sounding particularly like them. There's a distinct folk vein as well, amongst echoing vocals, thrumming guitars, and distinct bass lines. I can't exactly put my finger on what the Revisions are, but whatever it is, I like it. —Sarah Shay (Dirtnap)

SASS DRAGONS / PARTY GARBAGE: Split: 7"

First: I don't know if it's just my copy, but the labels were switched on my copy of this. Sass Dragons: Sweet merciful crap. Take the spastic energy, as well as the "no two songs sound alike" aspects of FYP, combined with the chaotic "we will fuck you up" attitude of the Dwarves and the tightness of The Ergs!, and you've got The Sass Dragons. Even for just three songs, I had to listen to it a few

times in a row, as it's further proof of some of the awesome stuff that's going on in DIY punk today. Party Garbage: Speedy, melancholy songs about, well, partying (so to speak). Not as good as the Sass Dragons side (but I mean, come on), and while I wasn't that into the earlier stuff I'd heard, this is probably my favorite output of theirs, so here's hoping they keep doing stuff like this. Both bands: Yeah, way to look crazy with a picture of yourselves all naked, when it's completely blurred out and pixilated to the point where you can't really tell what's going on anyway. Nerds! —Joe Evans III (Lets Pretend)

SCURVIES, THE: Nightprowler: CD

I'm usually not privy to Alaskan punk rock—think the last bands I heard were Skate Death and the Clyng-Onz back in the '80s—so seeing this in the review pile was a bit of a surprise. Pretty solid meat and potatoes punk rock here, mostly mid-tempo with catchy chorus bits and loud guitars. While it took a while to grow on me, some flashes of greatness and the promise of future brilliance are in evidence. Hafta say that a little more chutzpah and audaciousness in both the writing and delivery would push 'em onto the filet mignon tray, but in all, this ain't too shabby. —Jimmy Alvarado (Boot to Head)

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punchy, indie post punk band. They remind of the '90s-era stuff like Trenchmouth, Nation Of Ulysses (a bit), minus the spazzed-out vocals, and with more solid driving tendencies like Jesus Lizard. Although this isn't quite up to par with those bands, they definitely lean in that direction. It's good to see that post punk is alive and well today, harnessing the intensity we all grew up with. —Buttertooth (Thick)

SHAM 69: *Hollywood Hero: CD*

I ain't gonna get into the semantics of whether this is or isn't a release by the "real" Sham 69 'cause, frankly, I'm more interested in it being good than whether Jimmy Pursey's singing or not. That said, it definitely sounds like Sham—the good Sham, mind you. Whoever Dave got to take Jimmy's place does a fairly good impersonation of him, delivering the lyrics (the bulk of which were apparently written by Jimmy before he, um, departed) with just the right mixture of venom, conviction, and harmony. The rest of the band sound top notch, resulting in one of the better Sham releases I've heard since their "classic" period. If "I Want Glory" and "I Don't Believe a Word" are any indication, they might actually do all right without Jimmy, as both tracks are quite solid in their own right. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.sosrecords.us)

SHOREBIRDS: *Self-titled: 7"*

Over the summer I set up a show for two Olympia bands who were touring

with tapes that they had made. Tapes? I'm not a fan so I was pretty glad to see this DIY release come in from Olympia on vinyl. Shorebirds play melodic punk that's less poppy than Delay, but poppier than Witches With Dicks. Think of a less smart-ass Bent Outta Shape. Contains ex-members of Jawbreaker and the Latterman, which could explain why it's such a solid release. —Daryl (Shore Birds)

SHOT BAKER: *Awake: CD*

Straight ahead punk rock from this Chicago four piece: great melodies, tight chops, and thoughtful songwriting. This band takes bits of what other bands from their city blazed a dark trail with but add their own identity into it. "Friendship" and "Bred to Be Perfectionists" stick on this platter, but all the songs have their strengths. Let's put it this way kids—would Naked Raygun take this band out on tour unless they brought it? I think not. —Sean Koepenick (Underground Communique)

SICK E'S: *Whispers: 7" EP*

Gloomy death rock/punk stuff, emphasis on the "punk," more along the lines of 45 Grave than Christian Death. —Jimmy Alvarado (Going Underground)

SOCIETY HIGH: *Leave the Gun, Take the Cannoli: CD*

Punk rock out of upstate New York that has an early '80s punk sound. Reminds me of bands like Secret

Hate or the Nip Drivers. Also taking sounds from bands like Screeching Weasel, H2O, or Bouncing Souls. Melodic, mid-tempo three fingers in the air punk rock with a feel of fun. —Donofthedeat (Whiskey Shot)

SOMETHING FIERCE/ HANGOUTS: *The Split: 7"*

Both of these Houston bands play a once mainline brand of punk that recently has been relegated back to the underground. The end result is fun as hell. Not liking this fast, melodic punk record would be akin to not liking to smile. Niki S., who plays bass and does backing vocals for Something Fierce, provides killer female vocals for The Hangouts, who are harder than Something Fierce but just as catchy. It's records like these that stomp the jaded right out of me and take me back to the basement show vitality that made me jump up and down for the first time back in the day. Easily one of the best fucking records of the year. —Art Ettinger (Manic Attack!!!)

SOUL MERCHANTS: *1985-1987: 2 x CD*

What I have been given to review is actually a promo-only one disc redux of the actual two-disc retail release. By all applicable *Razorcake* by-laws, this technically disqualifies it for review. Under ordinary circumstances, I would be charitable and overlook this transgression. I can assure you these are not normal circumstances. BEST SONG: "Save My Soul" BEST SONG TITLE: "Cold Dark Bed"

FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: "In a day where neo goth bands and neo psych bands are doing well, it seems appropriate to revisit Denver's only psychedelic death rock outfit." Uh, if YOU say so, Stoney... —Rev. Nörb (Smooch)

STARLA! UBIQUITOUS: *A New Train of Thought: Cassette*

"Ubiquitous" is defined, so says my battered copy of *Webster's 9th*, as "existing or being everywhere at the same time." While that sort of multifaceted quality may be true in, I don't know, this woman's personal life or her emotional canon or whatever, her sonic output exists firmly within the walls of folk music. I'm sure she's just thrilled with what will probably be yet another Ani Difranco comparison to her stuff, but that's a lot of what I'm hearing. I'd say somewhere around the first self-titled record and *Not a Pretty Girl*. Another reference would be Kaia's stuff (mostly in the vocals), at least the live material I've heard. It's very laid-back, very calm—I enjoyed the fact that there are a few moments of her and the engineer dude talking and laughing in between songs, giving it a very honest, "get it down in one take" feel. I'd say the one drawback (and this is where the ubiquity does more damage than help) is the song "Obsessive Compulsive Love Song": it's a sarcastic take on unhealthy relationships, and its cynicism clumsily flies in the face of the rest of the record's hopeful, joyful, politics-

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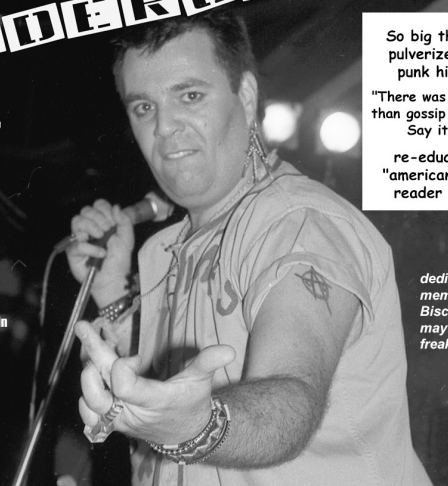
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are-personal tone. All in all though, rest of the album shines pretty nicely. —Keith Rosson (Sharpie Fumes)

SUPREME COMMANDER / ALIVE AT LAST: Split: CD

This full-length split CD from the New Jersey punk and hardcore scene presents Supreme Commander and Alive At Last as an antidote to the egos and attitudes of pretentious, posturing “false punk.” Supreme Commander claims the first six tracks with the kind of straightforward, no-nonsense hardcore that begs for a circle pit and lots of shouting-along. Alive At Last brings up the rear with six more tracks of we-mean-business hardcore, but fear not: their business is fun. The bands are well matched and the split is definitely worth the listen. —Sarah Shay (Bishop19)

SUZANNE SILVER: The Crying Mary: CD

Remember that time when the members of Shellac, Slint, and Battles all got together and had that big sex orgy? Well, someone wasn't using protection because a bastard child has been found; named Suzanne Silver. For some reason, it's Italian but, thankfully, it's speaking in English just like its parents, thus making it a little easier for me to understand, although all it does is yell most of the time, so it's still somewhat hard to interpret. I think it's safe to say that even if none of the parents take responsibility, Suzanne Silver is still a child that any

of them should be proud to call their own. —Kurt Morris (Radio Is Down)

SWANN DANGER: Deep North: CD

I wish I could tell you that this is a very good impression of a Siouxsie And The Banshees record. Unfortunately, it's not. —Sean Koepenick (Custody Night School)

TEENERS, THE: Self-titled: 7"

The oddest experience I've had is getting a body cast taken off. Since its fiberglass, they use a saw that is insanely loud and terrifying yet doesn't cut your skin—wtf? Who made that and why can't every saw do that? Strange. Time came to get it off, and, of course, the epitome of hot nurse is assigned to do it. So I'm naked in a body cast that goes from chest to waist and down one leg, otherwise I'm hanging free. Sadly, my Dad insisted on being part of the fascinating process. Gotta see everything, huh Dad? How else will you learn? So Dad sat there quietly as said hot nurse pushes a saw all over my body cast and frees me in what should have been my learning experience alone. Weird. The buzzsaw, the awkwardness, The Teeners understand. —Speedway Randy (Super Secret)

THIS MOMENT IN BLACK HISTORY: It Takes a Nation of Assholes to Hold Us Back: LP

TMIBH has the versatility and intensity of Rites Of Spring, the political/social conscience of Dillinger

Four, and have the ability to just bring it harder than 99.9 percent of the entire world's population (Sweden included). If Trial By Fire's *Ringin' in the Dawn* had been recorded by Steve Albini and they really wanted to stir things up it—might have been this album. *It Takes A Nation...* is an adventure of an LP traveling through the American Midwest with heavy, yet fluid, guitars as your guides and the occasional sound effect just making the trip even more interesting. If there ever was the perfect combination of passionate DC hardcore with Midwest garage-punk, this could probably be it. This record came out last year and is now available on vinyl through X-Mist Records. —Daryl (X-Mist)

THOMAS FUNCTION: My Empire: 7"

The best band you're currently sleeping on. Off kilter, somewhat dancey, garagey rock that recalls the best parts of '70s, Lou Reed, and Brian Eno. They're able to toss all that in a blender and actually pour out something worth while and relevant. I've been going relatively crazy over this band for the last year or so and it makes me feel like I'm jumping up and down on a chair in the middle of a crowded room and no one is fucking paying attention. Wake up motherfuckers. Alabama has birthed something you'd never expect to rise from its back woods. I'm thinking this situation is going to change in 2008. These guys have a full length coming out on Alive

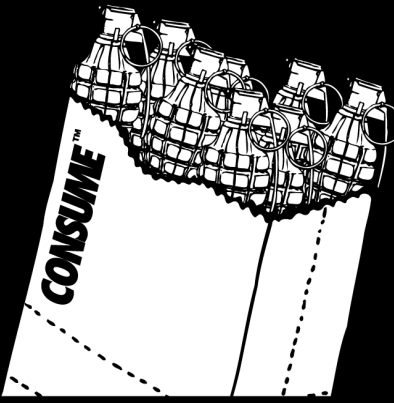
Records at some point. —Steve (Black Owl Radio)

TIGERSHARK / THANK GOD: Split: 12"

Thank God: Hey, let's walk down the hall of this practice studio. Behind the first door, we'll hear pummeling, violent hardcore. What's this down the hall? A guy practicing Iron Maiden bass lines? Okay...Then his neighbor is doing creaky, country moans over some Blind Joe Death guitars? Rad. And at the end of the hall is someone blasting that old *Southeast Hardcore Fuck Yeah* comp and crying over it. Cool. I'd be happy to take that walk again. Tigershark: What if you and your buds got all hyped up and decided “No, we really can push through this concrete wall?” Then when the cinderblocks fell on your head and didn't hurt, someone yelled “I just thought of the song title of a lifetime! ‘He's Not a Bartender, He's an Artist!’” and everyone went “Too true, man. Too true.” Terrific cover art from Ryan MacLennan. One gripe: A 10" on 45? Come on guys. Just do a 7". Al Gore is pissed. —CT Terry (Molslook)

TIME FLIES, THE: The In Crowd: 7"

This band would fit into a genre that I would like to call “plural rock.” Plural rock is music made by bands with names like The Stinkies or The Greasies or The Porknobs or The Toilets or something that always ends in “s.” You can be pretty much assured by the sound of the band name that

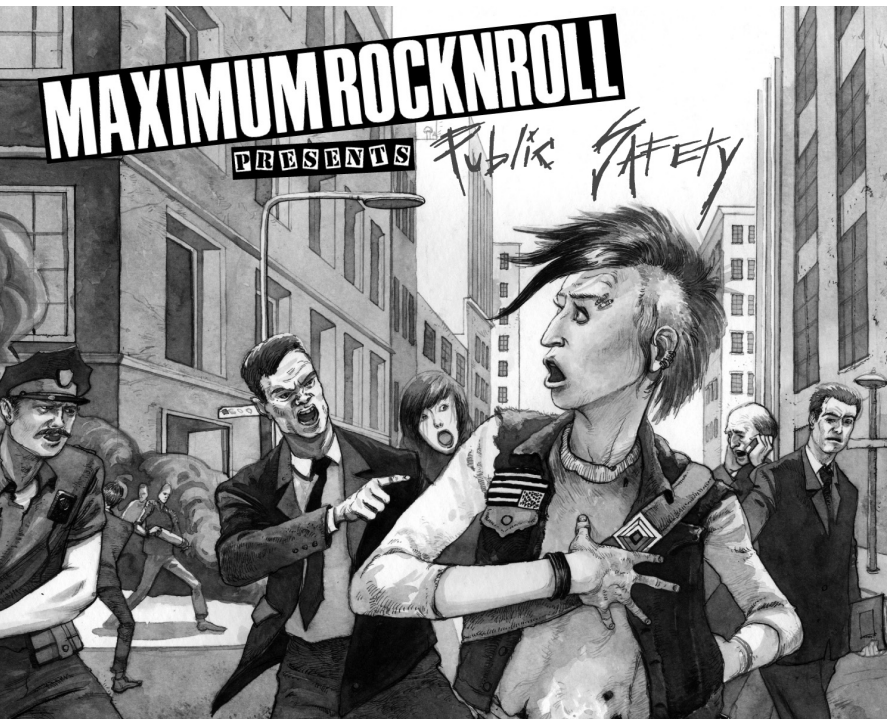


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they are or going to be an umpteenth generation retread of a rock'n'roll, punk, or garage rock band. I usually write bands like this off based on their name alone. Hell, if I miss out on a good band in the process, my loss right? But from my understanding, the cream rises to the top and I'll find out about the good shit eventually. Anyway, this isn't really that bad of a record or anything, it's just... plural rock. —Craven Rock (Douchemaster)

TOO MANY DAVES: Self-titled: 7"

Party punk (I'm pretty sure we can call this a sub-genre these days) super group, where the uniting factor is in the name. Now, as you might imagine, the general topics at hand here involve partying, so at the risk of sounding like a dick, I'm going to say that I wish the songs were fleshed out, just a *little*, especially lyrically speaking. I say that with the reasoning that I'm probably the least-partying/nerdiest dude you'll find, and not only did I enjoy this, but upon listening to "Honkey Lips," I wanted to personally thank Todd for sending it to me as it pretty much summed up my life at the moment ("Getting bored of the shit you do all day is better than getting yelled at for the shit you do all day"). —Joe Evans III (ADD)

TOUGH: Fast/Faster: LP

I don't have much info to go off of here, but it looks like, at the core, this is a Ramones/Queers influenced pop punk band, with a bit more edge to it.

I was a little curious why they put all the songs on one side of the record and then some crazy etching on the other side. Also I tried looking them up online, and they had the whole thing up for download, with a message like, "Vinyl for the elitists, online for the masses." Pretty good and enjoyable if you like this sort of stuff. —Joe Evans III (El Topo)

TRIP DADDYS, THE: Too Much, Too Fast: CD

The Trip Daddys have been one of my favorite bands for a while. They're best described as psychobilly, but their energetic shows also draw fans of punk and garage. They remind me of Hasil Adkins, the Reverend Horton Heat, and Link Wray. *Too Much, Too Fast* has stronger country and blues notes than the band's earlier efforts, and it continues the band's habit of creating potent mixes of styles within the same song. "Don't Wanna Know" is an addictive tune, with a rapid-fire chorus that pulls you along whether you want to go or not. Many of the tracks deal with women who are trouble, and the best of these is "All the Above." "By the Heart," a love song with bassist Jamey Almond singing lead, is the most purely country track on the album. It's upbeat and romantic, but the lyrics also conjure powerful images of loneliness and despair amid "the cold walls and the sweating pipes." Craig Straubinger's guitar playing forms the core of the group's intense,

unpredictable sound. *Doublewide* is still the Daddys' best album, but this one is a great introduction to the band. —Chris Pepus (www.tripdaddys.com)

TYVEK: Fast Metabolism: CD

Compilation CD of all their singles, each song a winner, putting faith in true garage rock is still replacing the void of The Gories. Yes, I said that band. Highly recommended. —Speedway Randy (Burned CD bought from the band at their awesome show.)

UNDER PRESSURE: Black Bile: CD

Musical tastes are so subjective. Reviewing music, even more so. I've had records I've played on, songs I've written, compared to bands I've never heard of before, much less listened to or ripped off, intentionally or not. So, for all I know, Under Pressure has no idea who Fucked Up is, or if they do, it's entirely possible the similarities I hear are in no way intentional. But again, reviewing music is mired in subjectivity—we're all at the mercy of limitations, both the band's the reviewer's. And I'm hearing a heavy, heavy tip of the hat to that band on this album; the vocalist sounds remarkably like Pink Eye (or whatever stupid moniker the dude's going by these days) and the music itself sounds like discarded outtakes from the *Epics In Minutes* collection, until the final track, "The Last," which is a slow, simmering dirge remarkably similar to something from *Hidden World*. I hate to compare one band so rigidly

to another (because Under Pressure doesn't come close to giving me the same spiritual piss-shivers that Fucked Up does) but after listening to *Black Bile* multiple times, that comparison's the only one that keeps springing to mind. —Keith Rosson (Escape Artist)

UNDER PRESSURE: Black Bile: LP

These guys keep the thrash-o-matic drum beats to a bare minimum and opt instead for some driving, blunt force beats to propel some solid tuneage. It's probably not wholly intentional, but the singer is sometimes reminiscent of Snake from Voivod. Not bad. —Jimmy Alvarado (Fashionable Idiots)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: He Put the Bomp! in the Bomp-Greg Shaw: CD

Incredible compilation of bands paying tribute to the late Shaw, founder of Bomp Records. It starts out with the one-two sucker punch of The Plimsouls doing "Good Times" and The Briefs tackling "She's Just a Girl on the Block." Other groups cover The Zeros, The Dead Boys, and Roky Erickson too. Captain Sensible even contributes to Nikki Sudden's take on "Kill City." Twenty-three killer songs, this also came with a book and T-shirt in a hundred run package. But at least get this CD to find out about Bomp Records and the man that made it so fucking cool. —Sean Koeppenick (Bomp!)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Retro Is Poison: LP

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Karnvapan Attack (Spain), I Object, and Active Minds (U.K.) who I didn't know were still an active band. Starting things off is one my favorite bands to go see live. Their mixture of death rock and punk ala Rudimentary Peni is challenging and interesting. A band you have to see live once in your lifetime to really see what their madness truly is. Karnvapan Attack from Spain takes their name from a Mob 47 song, but that is not their primary influence. They take the early '80s Scandinavian sound and meld it with pieces of early American hardcore. With the pieces together, they bring forth a forceful attack. I Object has been flying past my radar. I have a couple of their releases I never got around to listening to. I know they tour extensively but I have missed them the few times they have come around my way. Now sitting here listening to them, I am the one who has truly missed out. Straight-ahead, female-fronted hardcore that keeps the songs short and to the point. A ferocious delivery of rage, but they change it up to keep songs from becoming monotonous and generic. They play with the tempo and are not afraid to play with the sounds and notes. But, in the end, their thrashing is what is going to slap you in the ass. Closing the comp is U.K.'s Active Minds. A perfect blend of anarcho punk meets thrash. They have been at it for quite some time now but they have not become complacent. They still question the

realities of life and spew it forth with abrasive aggression. Comps are not always my favorites these days, but this one stands out amongst the comps out there that feel like they are full of filler. —Donofthedeat (Punks Before Profit)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

The Black Garfield Comp: CD

Four bands: Part Man Part Horse, The Old Timerz, Coconut Cool Outs, Unnatural Helpers, all of which I've never heard of. No track listing, so I have no idea who's doing what. Those tracks that have that spastic dance feel of the Trashies or the Sneaky Pinks are awesome. Those few songs with the dude who sings like he's got a healthy stash of Lifter Puller and Hold Steady records on his shelf are pretty great. The rest of it varies from ignorably annoying to full-on shit-tastic. Lots of weird dick joke humor going on in there inside this sweet three-color hand screened cover, which was a little off-putting, even though I love me a good dick joke. —Megan (Haunted Horse)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

We Just Call It Roulette, Vol 1: CD

Russian Recording is a sound studio in Indiana making records for independent bands for the past four years. This disc is a one-time pressing of 500 copies. Most the bands are obscure Midwest bands. I appreciate the underground factor of this disc. The musical styles vary

from folksy to indie rock to hardcore. From Billy Bragg ideas to Slint's and Jesus Lizard's musical twists. The hardcore tracks include Wasteland DC and Racebannon. There are a plenty of good acts on here including: Lucky Pineapple, Beltane Fire, Turn Pale, and Abner Trio, among others. Diversity is punk rock. Russian does decent recordings as well. Check 'em out if you are in Indiana.—Buttertooth (Russian Recordings)

VERSE UNSUNG, A:

The Autumn EP: CD

The name scared me from the start. These guys from Minneapolis need to take a good listen to Dillinger 4. I think they want to be pop rock stars that sound a little hard. You know the type: shopping at the mall and rubbing elbows with Grammy-award winning producers for crossover success. This is a punk rock magazine and when there is a blatant lack of understanding of DIY culture, ideology, ethics, and a simultaneous affection for mass popular culture, all you get from me is a big fat, "This sucks!" —Buttertooth (Somnio Artist Group)

VIOLENT ARREST: 7"

So, picture this: Violent Arrest walk into a bar... No, no, that's not right. Violent Arrest walk into a VFW Hall, or a community center, or a basement, or, hell, maybe even a bar, sure. They then proceed to lay waste to the entire place with their

relentless worship and emulation of '80s hardcore, and you can take that for what it is. I mean, they're not reinventing the wheel by any stretch, but the wheel they've created is big (great recording quality), rolling very fast (ten songs in *maybe* ten minutes), and covered in sharp, scary spikes (as there's no lyric sheet, I've got no idea what they're singing about, but the titles don't exactly denote glee or contentment, and by jumped-up Christ, they sound like they mean it). So it's probably best if you get out of the way. Another solid one for this label. —Keith Rosson (Deranged)

VOICE OF THE MYSTERONS: *The Have Pulled Down Deep Heaven on Their Heads: CD*

Sometimes when you wish for something a little off the beaten path, you get it in spades. Case in point: this disc: Imagine that Biafra and Saccharine Trust's Jack Brewer had a love child and he'd been recruited to sing in a Scratch Acid cover band wholly conceived in the mind of the dudes in Rudimentary Peni and you ain't even partly there. This is unrelentingly noisy, pretty danged original sounding, and fucked up in all the right ways. Can't wait to spring it on the guests at my next garden soiree. —Jimmy Alvarado (Boot To Head)

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which can be over before you know it, you're able to firmly get an idea of what a band's trying to do—but you get *two* of 'em to try on for size. So I figured Sweden's Penalty Time was going to be some nutty thrash stuff, given that their side of the sleeve had a drawing with skeletons with those little flipped up hats on it. That and the band name were really all I had to go on, and surprise, surprise, I was way off. Me and my assumptions. They're actually kicking out some pretty decent, catchy streetpunk stuff: think of a more gruff Criminal Damage, or Blitz with a bit more of a hardcore flair. Not bad by any stretch. Wardance is playing dark and doomy crust stuff—they don't really provide any band information at all, so I'm just guessing when I say that a guy and a girl are trading vocal duties here. If I'm wrong, you lads should know that one of your vocalists sounds strikingly like the woman from Hireduran. Taken as a whole, it's a great introduction to both bands, and neither one of them skimp on the content; generally good songs and consistent songwriting throughout, and there's so much music packed onto this thing, the record would occasionally skip due to the grooves being so thin. Pretty solid attack. —Keith Rossen (Penalty Time)

WASTED TIME: No Shore: 7" EP
Seven more cuts of hardcore carved from the same cloth as bands like Negative Approach and Out Cold.

Not too fast, not too slow, but plenty pissed. —Jimmy Alvarado (Grave Mistake)

WISDOM TEETH: Self-titled: CDEP

This five-song EP from Portland's Wisdom Teeth bears a great resemblance to Virginia's Haram (who basically combine Drive Like Jehu and Sonic Youth) or the great Unwound. While it's played competently, it doesn't really have any bells and whistles or even a swinging leg that kicks me in the balls. Unfortunate. —Kurt Morris (Radio Is Down)

WORDS: Self-titled: CD

Is it naïve of me that I expected a band called Words with an album called *Words* to have an emphasis on, y'know, words? Words's atonal, frenetic, slightly mathy hardcore has a few good lyrics, but the way vocalists Justin Morales and Morgan Travis scream them, you'd never know without cracking the insert. Doing so does prove informative, however; they've included a manifesto of sorts inside, explaining that they give away their music for free because "music is passion, not an industry." —Sarah Shay (Self-released)

WRETCHED ONES, THE: Make It Happen: CD

It took them almost a decade, but the irresistible Wretched Ones finally return with their fourth full-length album. The Wretched Ones

are one of the few surviving bands from the oi/streetpunk boom of the 1990s. Perhaps they've endured since they truly do live the working class existence that other bands only purport to. They work blue collar jobs and don't try to make a career out of the band. Live shows reveal that they have some of the most ribald fans of any active band of today. They traditionally sing about being old and working themselves to the bone, and it's been wise of them to take so long between records since all four albums are essential. While there are no songs as catchy as "Bicycle Jack" or any of their occasional melodic songs from the past, every track on here retains that Wretched magic that fans know and love. New classics include "Skin Neighbor" and "Lady Boss." It's always been hard to explain why this seemingly dopey music is so damn effective, but nothing gets us fans going the way The Wretched Ones do. This new batch of laugh out loud lyrics you can raise your fist in the air to, belted out by vocalist Pit, will provide years of fun for a burgeoning new generation of Wretched fans. —Art Ettinger (Headache)

YOUNG LASSES, THE: Sad Fur Peak: CDEP

According to the info that came with this, the main dude responsible is an abstract painter who got into making his own tape loops. He got involved with two other cats and they decided to make a kinda hip hop/punk/skronk

hybrid, which is exactly what this sounds like. It's quite good when it works, kinda meandering when it doesn't, but when you average the two ends of the spectrum out, it's a consistently interesting take on the melding of all aforementioned genres. —Jimmy Alvarado (The Young Lasses)

ZATOPEKS, THE: Damn Fool Music: CD

The latest release from these prolific Europeans, who are known for their take on pop punk crossed with rock'n'roll. They seem to try to take things a little further on this one as well, with some subtle indie rock and jazz influences (especially on "Daily Mail," which is one of my favorite tracks on the record). Other miscellaneous thoughts that popped into my head while listening involved wondering if Sonic Iguana had moved to overseas, and that the vocals sounding like a pop punk cross between Jello Biafra and Leonard Graves Phillips. —Joe Evans III (Whoa Oh)

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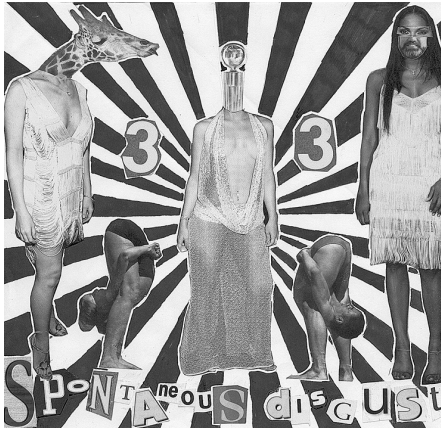
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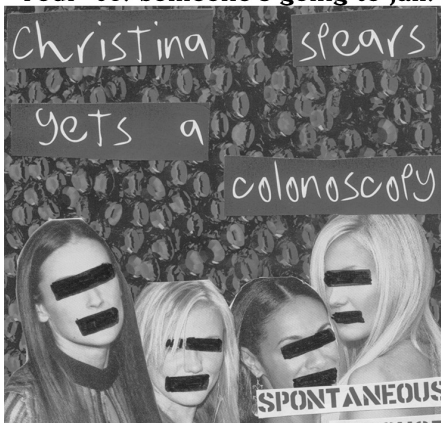
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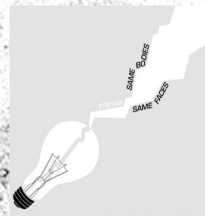
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to bands and labels that were reviewed either in this issue
or to be posted on www.razorcake.org in the next couple months.



- **Accident Prone**, PO Box 15087, Portland, OR 92793
- **ADD**, PO Box 8240, Tampa, FL 33674
- **Arclight**, PO Box 302978, Austin, TX 78703
- **Asian Man**, PO Box 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030
- **At The Library**, PO Box 1398, Southampton, Hants S016 9WX, UK
- **Atakra**, 1020 Camino Carlos Rey, Santa Fe, NM 87507
- **Attack Formation**, 1510 Koenig Insect City, TX 78756
- **Australian Cattle God**, 1306 E. 6th St., Austin, TX 78702
- **Automatic Music Explosion**, 1138 Hacienda Pl., Suite 104, W. Hollywood, CA 90069
- **Auxillary**, PO Box 17585, Louisville, KY 40217
- **Avenue Rose**, PO Box 2777, Olympia, WA 98507
- **Bacon Towne**, PO Box 1063, Tallevast, FL 34270
- **Barbarian**, 254 W. Gilman, Madison, WI 53703
- **Big Neck**, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195
- **Bishop19**, 1218 Treasure Ave., Manahawkin, NJ 08050
- **Black Numbers**, 44 Manners Rd., Ringoes, NJ 08551
- **Bloodtown**, PO Box 22083, Oakland, CA 94623
- **Bombs and Beating Hearts**, 1382 West 7200 South, West Jordan, UT 84084
- **Bomp**, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91505
- **Boot To Head**, PO Box 9005, Portland, OR 97207
- **Capital**, 243 15th St. #S1, Brooklyn, NY 11215
- **Captain Oi**, c/o PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks HP10 8QA, England
- **Chainsaw Safety**, PO Box 260328, Bellerose, NY 11426
- **Chaz**, PO Box 15811, SD, CA 92175
- **Cherry Red**, Long Island House, Warple Way, Acton, London, W3 0RG, UK
- **Cherry Red**, Unit 17, 1st Flr, Elysium Gate West, 126-128, New King's Rd., London SW6 4LZ, England
- **Crafty**, 75 Earley St., Bronx, NY 10464
- **Criminal IQ**, 3501 N. Southport Ave., Chicago, IL 60657
- **Culture Shock**, 1766 Nathaniel Rochester Hall, Rochester, NY 14623
- **Custody Night School**, PO Box 3881, Berkeley, CA 94703
- **Darkjoy**, 720 River Trail, Hailey, SD 83333
- **Deranged**, 2700 Lower Rd., Roberts Creek, BC, V0N 2W4, Canada
- **Die Slaughterhaus**, PO Box 160168, Atlanta, GA 30316
- **Dionysus**, PO Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91507
- **Dirtnap**, 2615 SE Clinton St., Portland, OR 97202
- **Dischord**, 3819 Beecher St. N.W., Washington DC 20007
- **Drunk 'n' Roll** c/o Frenzel, Jessmerstr. 10, 10247 Berlin, Germany
- **Dusty Medical**, PO Box 1981, Milwaukee, WI, 53201
- **Escape Artist**, PO Box 472, Downingtown, PA 19348-0472
- **Fashionable Idiots**, PO Box 580131, MPLS, MN 55458
- **Fast Crowd**, 2721 Wightman St., SD, CA 92104
- **Fat**, PO Box 193690, SF, CA 94119
- **FDH**, 2008 Montrose St., Philadelphia, PA 19146
- **Feacs**, 1284 64th St., Emeryville, CA 94608
- **Fight for Your Mind**, 47 Ave. Gilbert Roux, 03300 Cusset, France
- **Get Hip**, PO Box 666, Cannonsburg, PA 15317
- **Get Outta Town**, PO Box 4004, Winter Park, FL 32793
- **Going Underground**, 1822 G St., Bakersfield CA 93301
- **Go-Kart**, PO Box, 20 Prince St. Station, NY, NY 10012
- **Grave Mistake**, PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23241
- **Green Noise**, 2615 SE Clinton, Portland, OR 97202
- **Haunted Horse**, 221 24th Ave E Lower, Seattle, WA 98112
- **Headache**, PO Box 204, Midland Park, NJ 07432
- **Hell's Tone**, PO Box 162, 53101 Lappeenranta, Finland
- **Hellcat/Epitaph**, 2798 Sunset Blvd., LA, CA 90026
- **Hideaway House**, 65 St. Fintans Villas, Deansgrange Rd., Co. Dublin, Ireland
- **In the Red**, PO Box 50777, LA, CA 90050
- **Insubordination**, PO Box 2846, Columbia, MD 21045
- **It's Alive**, 11411 Hewes St., Orange, CA 92869
- **Johnny Cat**, PO Box 82428, Portland, OR 97282
- **Last Hope**, 2005 E. Carson St., Pittsburgh, PA 15203
- **Learning Curve**, PO Box 18378, MPLS, MN 55418
- **Let's Pretend**, PO Box 1663, Bloomington, IN 47402
- **Lollipop**, 2 Blvd Théodore Turner, 13006 Marseille, France
- **Lovitt**, PO Box 100248, Arlington, VA 22210
- **Make or Break**, 2508 N Francisco Ave., Chicago, IL 60647
- **Manic Attack!!!**, 1707 Austin Ave., College Station, TX 77845
- **Molsook**, PO Box 14704, Richmond, VA 23221
- **More Smart Than You**, PO Box 42153, Tucson, AZ 85733
- **Near and Far**, 2757 Dorman Ave., MPLS, MN 55406
- **No Idea**, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604
- **Organized Crime**, PO Box 213, Brookfield, IL 60513
- **Parlor**, 1910 12th Ave. W., Ste. 103, Seattle, WA 98119
- **Penalty Time** c/o Adlerbon, Nordostpassagen 37, SE-41311 Göteborg, Sweden
- **Perpetrator**, PO Box 68-984, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand
- **Phratry**, PO Box 14267, Cincinnati, OH 45250
- **Plague Music**, PO Box 5442, Willowick, OH 44095
- **Plan-it X**, PO Box 14001, Gainesville, FL 32604
- **Polypore**, 1264 Grove St., SF, CA 94117
- **Postfact**, 1656 Monroe St. NW, Washington DC 20010
- **Prank**, PO Box 410892, SF, CA 94141-0892
- **Punks Before Profits**, PO Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI 49501
- **Rabid Dog**, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76111
- **Radio Is Down**, PMB#1436, 120 State Ave. NE, Olympia, WA 98501
- **Rally**, PO Box 447, Mars, PA 16046
- **Rally Point**, 160 Dudley Dr. #537, Athens, GA 30606
- **Red Leader**, PO Box 20836, Park West Finance Station, NY, NY 10025
- **Repulsion**, 2552 N. Booth St., Milwaukee, WI 53212
- **Roadhouse Tunes**, 9102 Edwards Dr., St. Louis, MO 63132
- **Scenester Credentials**, PO Box 1275, Iowa City, IA 52244
- **Schizophrenic**, 17 W. 4th St., Hamilton, Ontario, L9C 3M2, Canada
- **Sex Cells**, 253 N. Broadway, Apt. 10, Portland, OR 97227
- **Sharpie Fumes**, PO Box 31224, Halifax, NS, B3K 5Y1, Canada
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- **Sling Slang**, 36 Kane St., Southington, CT 06489
- **Smokin' Barrel**, 11029 Candor St., Cerritos, CA 90703
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- **Whoa Oh**, 21-36 43rd St., Astoria, NY 11105
- **Words**, 630 Lander St., Reno, NV 89509
- **X-Mist**, PO Box 1545, 72195 Nagold, Germany
- **Young Lasses, The**, 1752 SW Oldwire Rd., Lake City, FL 32024

ZINE REVIEWS

Send all zines for review to:
Razorcake,
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“Almost all the
MRR columnists
are over the age
of thirty! Some
of them are over
fifty! This is fuck-
ing punk rock. .”

—Kurt Morris

ADJECTIVE NOUN #1, free,
5 ½" x 8 ½", photocopied, 24 pgs.
If Steven Wright was fifteen and did
a handwritten poetry zine, it would
have a similar feel to this. It mostly
seems to be a compilation of random,
amusing thoughts and crude drawing,
all handwritten. This is done by
Ben Endres, the same guy who did
Down with the Driver. Get both and
you'll have enough reading material
for about two Saturday morning
bathroom trips. —Will Kwiatkowski
(Moose Press, 701 Pine St., Athens,
WI 54411)

BULLSHIT BY WILLIAM ORR,
\$2-3, 5½" x 8½", 24 pgs.
Tall tales that may be about a
traveling, alternative circus. Asheville
comes up, coffee is mentioned in
poetry, and there is a bit of a "crusty
with a university email address who
brags about dumpstering" vibe, but
it's all saved by an awesomely weird
story about two Barbie dolls having a
domestic conflict. —CT Terry (William
Orr, 452 Centre St., Apt. 2, Jamaica
Plain, MA 02130)

DOWN WITH THE DRIVER #3,
free, 7" x 8 ½", photocopied, 28 pgs.
I enjoy this zine way more than I
should. It's simple, consistent, not
trying to impress anyone, and yet
you still get a feel of what the guy
behind it is trying to do. There are
some comics, impossible games, a
section on missed shows (apparently,
the author is a ska fan), an interview
with None More Black, and one
column on going to a show. Some
entertaining faire. —Will Kwiatkowski
(Moose Press, 701 Pine St., Athens,
WI 54411)

DUDES MAGAZINE #10, \$2,
8 ½" x 11", printed with glossy
cover, 64 pgs.
I live in northern California, and
have for nineteen years, and in that
time, as most men my age have,
I acquired the word "dude" as a
habitual phrase, often used when
I am excited or pissed. There is a
certain mentality that goes along

with the word, and often a negative
connotation is associated with it,
especially in the punk community.
This zine, however, embraces and
thrives on the Dude culture, with
plenty of sports commentary, some
bro-ish music notes, and a whole
lot of focus on lifestyle and making
sure your jorts are cut properly and
your beer is consumed quickly. As
with most dudes, the un-PC angle
(plenty of homophobic allusions,
some sexist lingo, etc.) comes off
more as annoying than offensive
or shocking, and definitely isn't
amusing. This zine is more exhausting
than entertaining, and I can't say I
recommend it. (*However*, if this zine
has one glorious moment, it is in an
interview with Asian Man Records'
Mike Park, where the company's
management style is compared to the
Oakland A's, something I have been
claiming for years. Cheers to that.) —
Will Kwiatkowski (Dudes Magazine,
5022 Winona Ave. Apt. A, St. Louis,
MO 63109)

EAVES OF ASS #6, \$3,
8 ½" x 5 ½", photocopied, 34 pgs.
Craven's tales of punk rock
redemption blew me away. *EOA* #6
is subtitled "The Music Issue," but
there's a lot more to it than that. After
the introduction, the zine starts out
with a reprint of Craven's *Razorcake*
column, "The Essence of Rock,"
before plunging into stories about
growing up white trash with Lynyrd
Skynyrd and Creedence Clearwater
Revival playing in the background. It's
easy for people who have grown up
outside of the Deep South to dismiss
its population as a bunch of racist
hicks, but it's not as easy to reject
everyone as an ignorant redneck when
they're your only family and friends.
Craven's storytelling is captivating,
raw, and unpretentious, making *EOA*
#6 one of my new all-time favorites.
—Lauren Trout (Craven Rock, 1627
16th St., Oakland, CA 94607)

FAKE LIFE \$1.50 or trade,
8" x 9", photocopied, 40 pgs.
This was okay. Homespun punk

zine out of Tallahassee. There are
some good bits, such as the Paris
Hilton Create-a-Con paper doll set.
Actually, that was pretty damn cool.
Some simplistic comics designed
more for effect than artistic quality;
I'm kinda tired by that shtick. Left-
wing rantings are always acceptable
in my book, but it's too easy for them
to get clichéd and trite. That happens
at times here, but there is a noticeable
attempt at even-handedness (sound
of cap being doffed). Interview with
Rollins—haven't seen one of those
in years; kinda nice. Too much dead
space throughout, though. This
could be a wonderful little zine with
a bit of desktop publishing, but as
minimalist as possible. —The Lord
Kveldulfr (Mike, 5666 Split Oak Ln.,
Tallahassee, FL 32303)

GREASEPOT #4, \$4,
5" x 8", copied, 52 pgs.
Contributor issue of a personal style
zine with folks in here talking about
their jobs, going tubing at the river
with their families, "losing their
glasses when they're blind," high
school uprising, and stuff like that.
There was also a short piece on the
fucked up policies of Best Buy and
Geek Squad stores and an artists
rendering of an MTX song. The
part I liked was the well-illustrated
travelogue. There's also more stuff;
this was a pretty busy zine. —Craven
Rock (Lauren Trout, 4115 Still Glade
Ln., Kingwood, TX 77345)

**HUB CITY: OUT OF THE
BASEMENT #4 and 5**, \$2,
8 ½" x 6" 22 and 18 pgs.
Part A: Short zines about what's
going on in New Brunswick, one
band interview (Hunchback and
Snake Vision) and one random piece
(an essay about random stuff and
some internet conversation that I
don't understand) each. Part B: The
first thing I read in both of these was
a criticism of another review I wrote
of this zine, and how "Razorcake is
so small minded, because they don't
GET what they're trying to do." My
first issue with that: Your beef is with

me, not an entire magazine run by
some people who work damn hard.
Second issue: Your focus is on your
local scene and the artists within,
quite possibly in the subtle hope to
not only encourage the growth in said
scene, but also that other people from
OUTSIDE said scene will read it and
say, "Hey, they've got some cool
stuff going on," or "Hey, this kinda
sounds like how my town could be."
Yeah, I get it. Not writing an ass kiss
of a review doesn't mean I missed
the point. I happen to think that if all
I (or other whomever else) just said
"Hooray, it's great!" about everything,
that there wouldn't really be much of
a point in putting effort into anything,
and we'd all end up with a lot of shitty
bands, zines, records, you name it,
and that it's possible to say something
to the effect of, "Hey, I like this, but
here's a suggestion," and people to go
back and forth like that and such. But
what do I know; I'm small minded.
—Joe Evans III (Hub City, PO Box
1561, New Brunswick, NJ 08903)

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL
#291, \$4, 8½" x 11", ? pgs.
The cover bills itself as the 25th
Anniversary Issue. I was still in
the kiddie pool when this was first
published, but now I feel well-aged
since I remember the big to-do that
MRR made for itself with its hundredth
issue back when I was in college or
some such thing. Huzzahs to them for
sticking around! The modus operandi
is the usual *MRR* fare, but as far as a
25th anniversary issue, this was kind
of a letdown. The subject matter in
articles, interviews, and columns gives
a "then-and-now" going over, but
when I saw the billing on the cover, I
was really looking forward to oodles
of pictures from the last twenty-five
years. Only five and a half montage
pages. Disappointing. —The Lord
Kveldulfr (Maximumrocknroll, PO
Box 460760, SF, CA 94146-0760)

MAXIMUM ROCK N ROLL
#294, \$4/\$5 Canada, 8 ½" x 11",
newsprint, ? pgs.
As always, it's another nice issue of

MRR. There are interviews with bands I've never heard of (except Leftover Crack—good interview with them), a story about one punk's journey from Lima, Peru, to NYC, and the late Lance Hahn has a piece on the band AOA. There's lots of other stuff, too, including all the reviews, other stories, letters and columns. I have to admit, the columns are my favorite part of *MRR*. Especially after reading this issue. Why? Because I finally realized that almost all the *MRR* columnists are over the age of thirty! Some of them are over fifty! This is fucking punk rock. Thank you for getting a wide spectrum of people involved in punk and not just a bunch

years, 173,800 pages of paper have been used to print poems that only take up about ¼ of the page, with the back of every page blank. What the hell?! In the name of the forest that had to be cut down to print this abomination, please, stop the insanity! —Lauren Trout (Tom Hendricks, 400 Hawthorne #5, Dallas, TX 75219)

NEGATIVE REACTION #8, \$?, 28 pgs.

How is it that the English can be so overtly political in zines and not sound nearly as ridiculous as Americans do in politically oriented print? Maybe their problems are somehow more real than ours, and maybe we've taken too

and abuse faced by California's incarcerated. Sexual abuse, prison labor, unhealthy conditions, and racial segregation are just some examples of what these men and women are subjected to. The strength and patience of the contributors who keep writing under such conditions is admirable, to say the least. This organization deserves your support for providing a creative outlet and vital legal information for California prisoners. —Lauren Trout (California Prison Focus, 2940 16th St, Suite B5, San Francisco, CA 94103)

PRISONER'S DILEMMA #2, \$2, 7" x 8 ½", photocopied

metal tube inside the earth" and the tortured and experimented on by dero (I don't know either). Then there was an essay on that old movie *Videodrome* and technology that was okay. But the rest of this was just too out there for me. —Craven Rock (Jason Rodgers, PO Box 138, Wilton, NH 03086)

PUNK OR NOTHING #3, \$?, 5½" x 8½", 32 pgs.

The *Punk or Nothing* drinking game: Every time they mention Ben Weasel, everyone drinks. Same for Squirtgun. Alternate shots for every mid-'90s Lookout! band mentioned. If you've still got your act together, read the rest

"The *Punk or Nothing* drinking game: Every time they mention Ben Weasel, everyone drinks. Same for Squirtgun. Alternate shots for every mid-'90s Lookout! band mentioned.." —CT Terry, *Punk or Nothing* #3

of teenagers and twenty-somethings who think they know everything (and this is coming from a twenty-something). Keep up the good work, *MRR*. —Kurt Morris (PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146-0760)

MOUNTZA #1, \$4.50, 8½" x 11", offset, 56 pgs.

Clean, nice layout with plenty of white space ala *Last Hours* or what I remember early issues of *Punk Planet* looking like. I really want to write "It's all Greek to me," but only about half of the stuff here is. Definitely rooted in the harder end of the spectrum—features interviews with Hewhocorrupts, Regulations, Felix Von Havoc, Zann, Fucked Up and more. Also has the "standard zine fare": columns, a tour report, record and show reviews, etc. Even discounting the fact that I can't make out half of the material and some of the stuff in English suffers from slightly spotty translations, I'd say that *Mountza's* on to something. Between the consistency of their coverage and the rock-solid layout, I'd say this is probably one of the best first issues of a music-based zine I've ever seen. Let's hope they stick around. —Keith Rosson (Mountza c/o Panagiotos Andrianos, Gr. Afentiuou 5, 14671 Nea Erthrea, Athens, Greece, mountzazine@yahoo.com)

MUSEA #158, \$?,

8 ½" x 11", photocopied, 22 pgs. Harsh truth be told, I find most poetry zines to be silly and annoying, but if you want to understand how disgusted I feel after reading *Musea* #158, then let's do some math for a moment. Say this zine has been published bimonthly for 158 issues, 22 pages each—I'll just guess the editor prints about 50 copies of each issue—that means that over the last twenty-six

much whiny influence from hippies. *Negative Reaction* is a working class punk zine that reminds me a lot of *Class War*, only it's concerned with music and the humor is genuine if a little less vicious. This issue includes interviews with Violators, the Warriors, the Tights, Conflict, and the Blood. Some of the features in here, such as "*Negative Reaction* vs. the Modern World," seem like they should be really entertaining, but it's so steeped in a specifically English working-class context that many of the references are lost on me. Still, I like this a bunch. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Trev Howarth, 20 New Front St., T/Lea, Stanley, Co. Durham DH9 9LY, England)

PI ALA MODE #1, free, 8 ½" x 11", photocopied, 30 pgs.

Dear Todd, Please forgive, but have you thought about implementing just a tiny bit of quality control up at Headquarters before you send review materials out? This isn't as much a zine as it is fifteen pages of someone named Alex's math homework that he doodled all over, and then photocopied. I digress. There's not much I can do with this in the way of a review. In fact, I'm concerned that if I review this like it's a zine, it'll set a precedent and people will soon start sending *Razorcake* their school yearbooks and family photo albums to review as well. Thanks in advance for your consideration of this issue. —Lauren Trout (Moose Press, 701 Pine Street, Athens, WI 54411)

PRISON FOCUS #28, \$5(prisoner) \$20(non-prisoners) for a 4 issue subscription, 8 ½" x 11", newsprint, 16 pgs.

The nonprofit organization California Prison Focus prints this newsletter of firsthand accounts of the injustice

This is a radical anarchist zine out of Seattle that contains several essays on self-defense from a radical perspective. In the same theme, there's an interview with Home Alive, a group that teaches self-defense to primarily women and queer folks, and the editor of *American Gun Report*, a left-leaning gun zine. There is a piece on police abuse in Seattle which is a pretty interesting read; the write-up on San Francisco Anarchist Book Fair, not so much—but if you're just anarchist as all hell—you might like that, too. —Craven Rock (Prisoner's Dilemma, PO Box 95006, Seattle, WA 98145-2006)

PROFANE EXISTENCE #54, \$5, 8 ¼" x 10 5/8", newsprint/glossy cover, 84 pgs.

Oh, someone down there likes me. By down there, I mean *Razorcake* HQ in L.A., because they sent me this nice little slab o' wood pulp. This issue has a huge feature on a longtime favorite of mine, an artist by the name of Fly. If you've purchased *Cometbus* or *MRR* in the past decade, you're probably familiar, and if not, this is a good place to check out some of her work. Good columns and interviews again this time, plenty o' politics, and a bonus CD to boot (that I haven't listened to yet! Bad reviewer!) —Will Kwiatkowski (Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

PSIONIC PLASTIC JOY #11, \$?, half-size, photocopied, 22 pgs.

Kooky zine for sure. It starts out with some nonsense about magicians and alchemy and initiation to "strike back against... the tyranny of rationality." Some kind of tired dada/surrealist-type pieces that I saw a lot more of in the '90s. A weird piece about some woman who claims that she and her daughter were sucked into "a large

of the interviews and reviews. Their enthusiasm jumps off the page like a stage diver at a Beatnik Termites show. —CT Terry (Richard Allsop, 4 Hedington Gardens, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8NW, England)

RAT CITY #5, \$1.50, 8½" x 12", photocopied, 16 pgs.

Yay! A zine from a country in which the native language is not English, but it's written in the local vernacular with English translations! Contents include a profile of 999, interviews with Funeral Dress, the Casualties, and Vanilla Muffins. Also includes info on zines, records, and shows, of course. I like this because it has a streetpunk feel but without the over-used snarl that seems to be a standard fashion accessory for such scenes at times. No, there's lotsa smiling in this, and has a bit of goof-punk flair to it, as well. I wish the photos were of better quality, though. If I knew how much 1000 Lira was, I'd say it was worth it (is it still Lira? Or Euros? The exchange rate for Euros as of 12/6/07 was 1.463 Euros to the American dollar, so I don't think that a copy of this costs \$1463 greenbacks. Anyway... wait! Found it on page two! They want a buck and a half for it! Well worth it!) In the end, I like this because of the attitude and that it makes learning Italian fun and meaningful. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Fabio Renzi, Via N. Sauro 11, 47841 Cattolica (Rimini), Italy)

SIDEWALK BUMP #2, \$5, 8½" x 7", offset w/ color cover, 52 pgs.

This is a badass comic zine about skateboarding featuring nine different contributors. I was impressed by the full-color cover: a watercolor painting of a night time skater which has a striking effect. Inside, the well-done contributions include stories about

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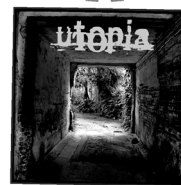
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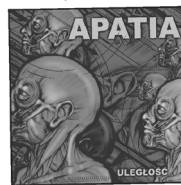
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first skateboards, people the artists have skated with, and the adventures they've had skating in different places. I wanted to make sure that *Sidewalk Bump* #2 wasn't overly romanticizing skateboard culture, so I showed it to a friend (who has been a real skate rat his whole life and wouldn't tolerate any cutesy shit) and he echoed the same thing that me and everyone else (skaters and non-skaters alike) said after reading it: "This is really cool. It makes me want to go skateboard now!" —Lauren Trout (microcosmpublishing.com)

SLUG AND LETTUCE #90, \$1 USA, \$2 Can/Mex, \$3 World, 11 1/2" x 15", newsprint, 24 pgs.

This is the twentieth anniversary issue of *Slug and Lettuce*. It's quite a bit different than usual. As usual, Chris(tine) has her column and in this particular one she gives us a rundown of the history of *S and L*, in her usual energetic as hell style. Worth ordering for that alone. What makes it different, however, is that the rest of the issue is a collection of years and years of Chris(tine)'s photos of bands. It sucked to find out that this magazine is going to be going on hiatus. The postage hike has hit this publication pretty hard. While she insists that this won't be the last print issue, it won't be the same as we know it. In order to stay above water, future issues will be more condensed

or something like that. That can't be good because I liked every part of *Slug and Lettuce*. Now I'm really, really bummed. These are truly the Last Days. I hope Chris(tine) gets some well-deserved rest though, she certainly deserves it. —Craven Rock (Slug and Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond, VA 23261-6632)

TRYING #5, \$1, quarter-size, photocopied, 64 pgs. *Trying* is a tough read. It's a journal of our man Dominic's inner struggle and hopeless despair. If that didn't scare you away and you're still reading this, then you should mail off for this right away. This is some of the most candid and honest writing you'll read in a long time. It comes from the guts of a truly tortured soul, so honest and heart-wrenching that even the most P.C punk would have to let this guy own his pain without accusations of privilege or whatever. For instance, when Dominic writes about traveling, it isn't just a bunch of happy punk rock stuff, he's truly trying to escape something and to find something that will fill his aching soul. He doesn't accomplish either, but he does accomplish translating that void to paper. In a scene that only respects the wild attention seeking mad ones, a heart of quiet desperation like that of the voice in this zine will remain forever alienated. All the loser chic stuff that the punks just love to wear like a badge of honor—such as

crashing on couches, being broke—just are more reasons for the author of this zine to doubt himself. When he writes about the punk scene, it's about how he feels apart from it, how it makes him feel old. That's the beauty of *Trying*; he has the balls to tell us about his sadness and all it may do is make some of us feel less alone. That's really worth something. —Craven Rock

WELCOME TO FLAVOR COUNTRY #11, \$1 or stamps, half-size, photocopied, 32 pgs.

This issue of *Flavor Country* has Kurt pondering old friends he lost touch with and being unable to build new ones that are as important or valid. He talks about the camaraderie of smokers and how he's kind of jealous of them. His ten year high school reunion is coming up and it triggers feelings of general restlessness, rudderlessness, and regret. And he writes about a lot more stuff too. There's also a short story that I didn't care for. An interesting thing about this issue is that he took random text and headlines from magazines and used it to trigger the thoughts that he wrote about. I've reviewed this zine before and I always come away from it with the same feeling. It's always bad in some parts, good in most parts. I doubt Kurt will ever be one of my favorite writers, but his zine is exactly what zines should be: someone writing their own history, telling their own story, and that's what

makes it good. He doesn't heartlessly type out a blog at high speed, he does a zine. But it has a true outsider voice, as in he's not one of those bike-riding, polyamorous, new school zinesters who claimed zines as their own when everybody else jumped online. So *Flavor Country* is about as legitimate a zine as you could possibly find and it's not bad either. —Craven Rock (Kurt Morris, 8820 Stone Ave. N. #301, Seattle, WA 98103)

WELCOME TO FLAVOR COUNTRY #12, \$1 or stamps, 8 1/2" x 5 1/2", photocopied, 36 pgs.

Kurt comes across as such a likeable character in his personal zine that I've really been looking forward to giving it a good review. Aside from a few poems and a piece about the people on his bus route, the bulk of *WTFC* #12 is made up of stories that give some insight to the author's life as well as provide some political and social commentary. The highlight here is Kurt's misguided attempt to "get right with god" by visiting the Mars Hill megachurch. The result is funny and frightening at the same time. The only downside to this zine is that it's a fairly quick read—large font and a few blank pages for some reason—but other than that; hell yeah Kurt, keep up the good work. —Lauren Trout (Kurt Morris, 8820 Stone Ave N. #301, Seattle, WA 98103)

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BOOK REVIEWS



Corpse of Freedom

By Dax and Lloyd Garner, 209 pgs.

"Teenagers from Mars" by the Misfits is the first thing that comes to mind here. I don't entirely know why, but reading *Corpse of Freedom* just reminds of it. In the same way that something like Joe Meno's *Hairstyles of the Damned* puts awkward, honest, and painful adolescence onto the page, Dax and Lloyd Garner's book brings the surreal-ness of teenage paranoia into the light. It sure as hell can't be wrapped up nice and neat, but it definitely will make an impression. Everdale, USA is like every suburb you've seen in a horror movie, with eerie hints and clues that everything is not all right, and something slightly sinister lives in the shadows of pre-planned perfection. Even if those shadows hide nothing besides the trials and tribulations of weird, cute girls, busted cars, and flakey friends, sometimes—we can eventually figure

As far as the illustrations, they are bright, they jump off the page, and they depict the story in a quirky yet accessible way for children. The illustrations remind me—or they look like—they were done with those big fat markers that smelled like fruits.

Overall, the story was okay, but not overly engaging. It would be interesting to observe the book read to a group of young children to see if it maintained their attention. I used to work in a kindergarten and read to kids. They really like stories where something dramatic is happening, in addition to a big picture that grabs them. They'll eat you alive if it's a bad book.

It's a cute book with a positive message, but nothing stellar. I guess if someone with a child likes the Bouncing Souls it wouldn't be the worst buy. —Jenny Moncayo (Hollywood Jersey, www.hollywoodjersey.com)

Silent Pictures

By Pat Graham

This book opens up with an introduction by Ian MacKaye, then photographs of Nation Of Ulysses, Born Against, and Bikini Kill. Fuck. To say the least, Pat Graham was there for some amazing shows, and, luckily, he had a goddamn camera in his hands and the ability to use it. There are a lot of bands in this book that lean toward the indie side of independent music, and a lot of bands that I've just plain never heard of, but the one's I'm familiar with make it more than worth it. The diversity of the photos creates its own tone, which lifts this book from the level of "band photos" to more of a story of Pat's life; the travels he has gone on and the friendships he has created. Multiple times, this book had me going, "Fuck, I don't like that band, but they look really good in this photo." I guess that's just Pat doing what he does. —Daryl (Akashic Books, PO Box 1456, New York, NY 10009)

Therefore, Repent! (A Post-Rapture Graphic Novel)

By Jim Munroe and Salgood Sam, 164 pgs.

A little over ten years ago, I had one of *Punk Planet's* "DIY Files" tacked up over my desk. I stared at it religiously, nightly, every time I sat down to work or answer mail. It was titled "How to Write a Novel," and was written by Jim Munroe. He'd written one himself and gotten it picked up, I believe, by HarperCollins. A few years later, he'd grown pretty firmly disillusioned with the mainstream publishing industry and has remained entrenched in the DIY publishing world ever since. So, I finished my novel and yeah, it was a piece of garbage, entirely unpublishable and probably more cathartic

The illustrations remind me—or they look like—they were done with those big fat markers that smelled like fruits.

out—those are enough to make any life seem crazy enough. The combination of this with the more real mystery unraveling in the background makes this an interesting read; not an easy one, but definitely interesting enough to ensure you're going to be going back to re-read all the parts you didn't get, because you'll want to know just what's going on. —Constantine Koutsouts (Books On Fire, 8018 N 55th Ave, Glendale, AZ 85302)

I Went for a Walk

By Shanti Wintergate, Illustrated by Gregory Attonito

I Went for a Walk is a children's book illustrated by the lead singer of the Bouncing Souls, Greg Attonito, and written by his wife, Shanti. I love the Bouncing Souls. I enjoy people's side projects and alternate avenues of creativity, so when I heard he was making a book I was interested, but when I heard it was a children's book I was a little skeptical. First, why a children's book, and could I really find the book interesting since I'm not the target audience?

Publishing-wise, the book looks great. It's all nice and glossy, in tons of color and with big lettering typical for reading to kids. The story is told from first person and discusses discovering the earth, finding people who are like you, and it explores space and a child's imagination. It has the "live life for each moment" moral to the story at the end. However, the actual story and progression of the plot doesn't really feel all the way secure. The main issue of the story is that the person is hungry and looking for a planet where they can eat. It ends with the child/narrator waking up in their bed from a dream and they smell breakfast. Then the idea of living life and enjoying the moments is reiterated to the reader.

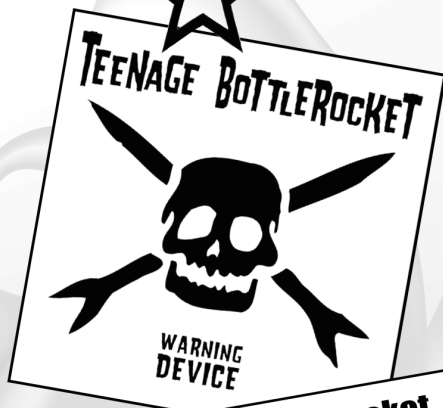
than anything else. Point is, Munroe was a punk who had walked down that path before me and had given me—if not a working blueprint on how to write a decent book—at least the impetus and inspiration to follow through and keep working even when the words weren't coming well. So it's great to see him still kicking around and, more importantly, successfully tackling the graphic novel format.

I really don't want to give too much of the plot away, as much of the joy of reading this thing comes from the fact that things get increasingly weird as the chapters go on. I will say that the story begins in an apparently post-Rapture world; hundreds of thousands of people have literally floated from the earth and disappeared, ascending into the sky. Jesus Christ is campaigning with George Bush—solely, of course, in red states. Angels (dressed in Vietnam-era fatigues and carrying M-16s) are systematically attempting to wipe out the remaining inhabitants of earth and facing resistance. Within the story, there are talking dogs, gay angels, resurrected homeless men, cyber-psychic lesbians, bikers that turn water into wine, a woman who turns ash into attack-birds, invisible Korean convenience store owners, and more. Like I said, I don't want to give too much of the plot away, but apart from the terrific pace of the story and Salgood Sam's gorgeous artwork, it's this attention to detail and bizarre bending of reality that makes *Therefore, Repent!* such a blast to pore over.

Salgood Sam (dude's real name is Max Douglas—it's backwards, get it?) has worked on titles for Marvel, DC, and Image, as well as a host of indie zines and comics; his work is somewhat suggestive of Derek Hess, but is much more refined. His sense of perspective and value is top-notch—as far as I can tell, his illustrations must be a mix of brushwork, charcoal,

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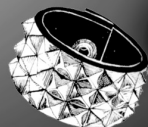


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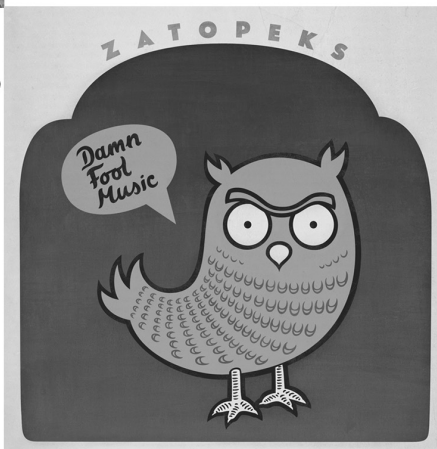
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pencil, and ink washes. Absolutely gorgeous stuff. Munroe's gotten the pacing of the story down tight and every chapter's got a cliffhanger that kept me turning pages—I read *Therefore, Repent!* in one sitting and still find myself thumbing through it well after the fact.

All told, this one's a keeper; the ending ties everything together nicely, but it's one fuck of a weird ride before you get there. —Keith Rosson (No Media Kings, 10 Trellanock Ave., Toronto ON, M1C 5B5, Canada)

Nobody's Nothings, A

By Denis Sheeham, 160 pgs.

I tried. Lord, I really did. You ever go through an old journal from years ago and wonder just what the fuck you were thinking when you wrote down whatever it is you come across? Something where you wrote “fuck” a lot because you were fifteen and, well, saying it was cool at the time? Well, Denis Sheeham's book is sorta of like that, reminding me of the little notebook I carry around all the time full of half-started story ideas and notes and journal-like entries, all of which have a long way to go before being considered “done.” It's a compilation of random ramblings, poetry, excerpts from his zine *Askew Reviews* (including the story with the dude pretending to be Ben Weasel, which I distinctly remember having heard somewhere... it's pretty funny), and various short stories. I tried to describe the book to someone last night, and I basically put it as someone just sweeping some old files, a zine, and whatever scraps of paper are lying around on his desk

and in his pockets into a black garbage bag, then presenting the bag as his manuscript. Now I know that sounds really mean, but like I said, I tried. I'm sure Sheeham's funny as fuck in person, probably, and an incredibly smart guy, but it just doesn't seem to come across here as it should. I'm not averse to compilations of works or non-linear structure in my reading, but *A Nobody's Nothings* just didn't do it for me. Some of Sheeham's fiction is really great, one story called “The Warmth” struck me as being perhaps the standout of the stories. The stories involving sex just seem unnecessarily over the top and not even as edgy as you'd think, and the “Brain Scribbles”—his random notes on anything from one-line thoughts that occur to him—to long rants on a variety of topics, including some girl at a Darkbuster show licking his face, to alcohol, to Oprah Winfrey (another gem), seem disorganized and somewhat shallow. You can make writing about dumb stuff interesting—I've read it before—and I just don't really see it here. When his writing focuses on raising a daughter as a single dad, and some of the unintentionally funny shit that his daughter says, just brings a smile to my face (the closing quote had me laughing out loud on the subway to work in the morning as I read and almost missed my stop), but the fact is that the rest of this book just drags those great moments down. —Constantine Koutsoutis (Bone Print Press, PO Box 684, Hanover MA 02339)



Cantankerous Titles & Obscure Ephemera, Vol. 1: DVD

Although his ideas are interesting on paper, Joe Biel's most recent stab at filmmaking falls flat. Five short documentaries are included on this DVD, along with an explanatory insert. I'll give you the rundown of each short; from the okay to the unbearably boring.

“Last Train Out of North America,” about the decline of passenger rail in the United States, was somewhat interesting and enlightening; definitely the best documentary on here. It features interviews with various train riders and explains how, over the last century, the railroad business has gone from a booming private industry to a failing public service on the bottom of the government's subsidy funding priority list. This short was not too bad at all.

“Of Dice and Men,” takes a look at strategies of obsessive Risk players. It is an original subject to analyze and it would probably have made a fascinating read, but when the concept comes to life on film, it turns out to be thirty-nine minutes of footage of people playing a board game in a room. It wasn't exactly riveting to watch strangers participate in an activity that I wouldn't find the least bit entertaining in regular life.

“Martinis in the Bike Lane” is about bike lane markings in Portland, Oregon that are decorated creatively by bored city employees. Again, a picture and a caption in a zine would have sufficed. Looking at barely remarkable alterations to stencils of a cyclist on concrete for eleven minutes was overkill, to say the least.

“Central Kansas—Canvas Central” features punk kids talking about the cultural importance and personal significance of patches. It's described as a “mockumentary” on the back of the DVD case, but in the booklet that it comes with, Joe Biel complains, “I'm kind of fed up with explaining that all of the interviews, history, and discussion in ‘Central Kansas—Canvas

Central’ are very real; not contrived.” So, it's a “*very real* mockumentary”? I don't get it.

“Cowboy Hat and a Cane” consists of a couple talking about their dog in a poorly-lit room, showing off snapshots of their dog as a young pup. I couldn't help but wonder if everybody who saw this documentary before it was mass produced was like, “Hell yeah! DIY punk rock youth are totally going to want to watch these people take their dog for a walk!”

Watching this DVD, I didn't get the feeling that much consideration was given to making these documentaries interesting and relevant to the audience. Joe Biel keeps mentioning aesthetics in the insert he wrote, but the documentaries (some shot in offices or the side of the street) failed to produce much visual stimulation. Overall, I was disappointed: I'm usually excited to hear about the novel things that make people's lives interesting, but this film was so dry that I didn't get anything out of it.

—Lauren Trout (microcosmpublishing.com)

China Blue: DVD

From 1985 to 2005, the U.S. trade deficit with China rose from \$0 to \$202 billion a year. Clothing sales account for a large percentage of that imbalance, and America's textile manufacturing industry essentially vanished during that time. On paper, China won that economic battle, but the victory did not extend to the country's workers.

In the beginning of *China Blue*, Jasmine Lee, a sixteen-year-old girl from rural China, travels to the city of Shaxi to find work. She gets a job at a clothing factory and looks forward to sending money back to her impoverished family. But the slogans Jasmine heard in school about China's “new era” of opportunity soon ring hollow. She and the other workers live in crowded quarters on-site and work up to twenty hours a day. Jasmine earns about six cents an hour and the factory's owner, Mr. Lam, holds back pay and makes deductions as he sees fit. Though Chinese law officially bars children under sixteen from the labor force, Jasmine meets a fourteen-year-old coworker. Interspersed with scenes from the factory are comments by Dr. Liu Kaiming, an expert on Chinese labor issues, who provides useful context on the exploitation of young workers in China.

To obtain access to the factory, the director/producer, Micha X. Peled, told Mr. Lam that the film was about him and his style of entrepreneurship. That tactic paid off, because Lam let his guard down and became increasingly comfortable sharing his delusions of grandeur. At one point, he expresses pride in the inspirational signs that he posts for the workers to see. “We shape their basic thinking, like Jesus did,” he remarks. Lam must own a bad translation of the Bible, because instead of the Golden Rule or the tale of Jesus and the money-changers, his signs say things like, “If you don't work hard today, you'll look hard for work tomorrow.”

The main problem with the film is the fact that some portions were clearly staged. Peled acknowledges that three of the girls were paid and that some of the scenes were re-enacted by different workers. He says that the re-shoot was necessary because the authorities seized some footage and at least one of the workers stopped cooperating. It would have been far better to stick to the real footage, since the staged scenes cast doubt on the veracity of the others. It is easy to see why the filmmakers would want to pay these

I couldn't help but wonder if everybody who saw this documentary before it was mass produced was like, "Hell yeah! DIY punk rock youth are totally going to want to watch these people take their dog for a walk!"

exploited workers. However, the payments open the possibility that the girls acted as they believed the filmmakers wanted them to act—even in instances where there was no intent by Peled's team to influence their behavior.

Despite the film's problems, there remains little doubt about the brutality of the factory system created by Chinese industrialists and western buyers. Dr. Kaiming offers this chilling assessment of Lam's sweatshop: "the factory in (this) film is better than most." —Chris Pepus (Teddy Bear Films, 690 Fifth St., SF, CA 94107; teddybearfilms@earthlink.net)

King of Punk: DVD

King of Punk is the latest in a recent glut of documentaries that aim to offer a recounting of punk's history. Like many of the others, it offers up interviews with lotsa people involved in the early days of punk (Joey Shithead of DOA, Penelope Houston of the Avengers, Marky Ramone, Wayne/Jayne County, and the Dead Boys' Cheetah Chrome) and hardcore (Dave and Ron from MDC, Wattie from the Exploited, and a couple of Abrasive Wheels) all of whom recount tales and offer insight into those much-ballyhooed days of yore. Unlike others, however, it also recounts the trials and tribulations of a more recent small, all-femme punk band. While there is much to praise in how both story lines are handled (kudos to all involved for mixing up the usual suspects with lesser seen folks like Jack Rabid, Robert from the Zeros/Catholic Discipline, and Charlie from the UK Subs; thanks also for having the foresight to include the guy running shows and putting out records to illustrate that there is still an active underground happening below the, uh, Warped impression being hawked in the mainstream), the resulting film is a bit schizophrenic in its delivery, with both threads neither quite

intersecting nor paralleling enough to keep things on track. How are the women of OBGYN a continuation of the tenets and values espoused by their antecedents? Are they "punk" because they play simplistic, snotty rock music, because they claim to be influenced by the Velvet Underground and the Stooges, or is there something deeper going on? In the end, this is much, much better than some, but still feels like it just never quite gels. —Jimmy Alvarado (www.etit.us)

Twisted Vol.1: DVD

I was a bit surprised to get this in the mail. I don't review too many DVDs for Razorcake, and my old band had a song on this one. No hard feelings with the Guff boys, but that video is embarrassing and it's over four years old! (Not to mention a bad concept put together by Greg at Go-Kart.) Anyway, I'll laugh it off, but damn, new material guys. It's a new era. I'm a low life now and you cats hang out with Steve Perry. In any case, this is mostly third-tier punk rock bands that are super poppy. Amber Pacific, which I like to make fun of, was the opening video. Also included are: Reel Big Fish, the Vandals, Tsunami Bomb, Satanic Surfers, Suicide Machines, Planes Mistaken For Stars, The Hellacopters, and Ghost Buffalo, plus a slew more. Mostly shit that was sort of popular five years ago, if ever. I did enjoy the weird computer graphics cartoons at the end. Soxx the Killer Bunny by Jay Kellom is pretty cool. It encompasses his dark sense of humor. All in all, this DVD is good to acquire for five bucks or less if, for nothing else, the laugh factor involved. —Butter tooth (Go-Kart)

Many more DVD reviews can be found at www.razorcake.org.



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